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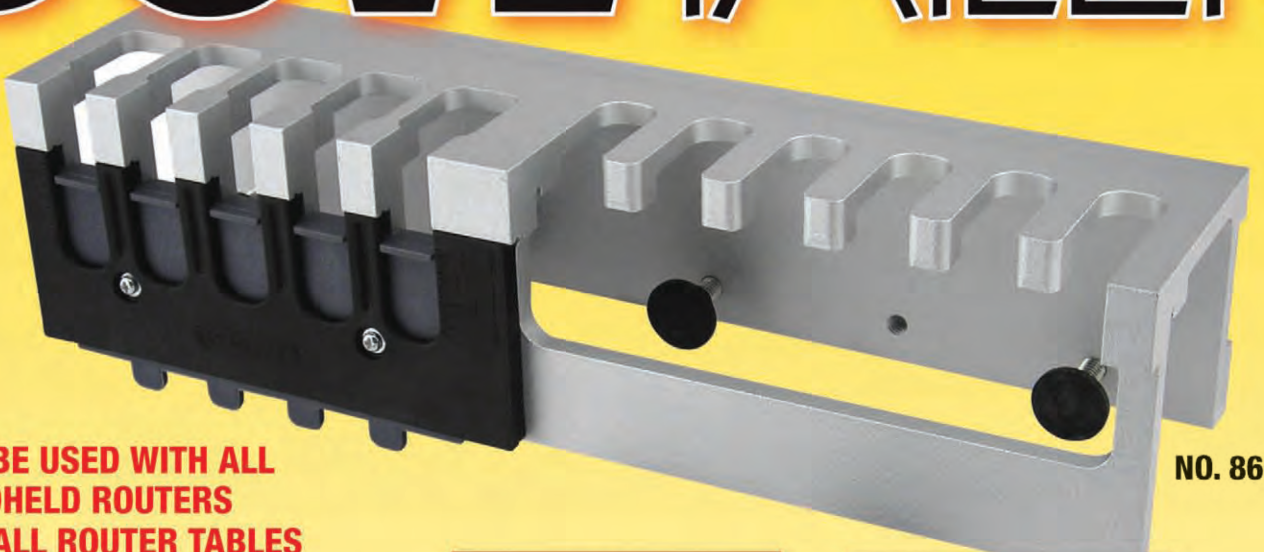

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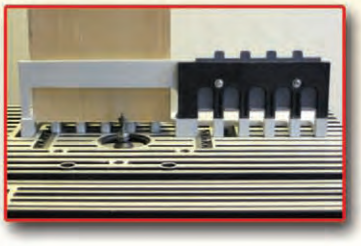

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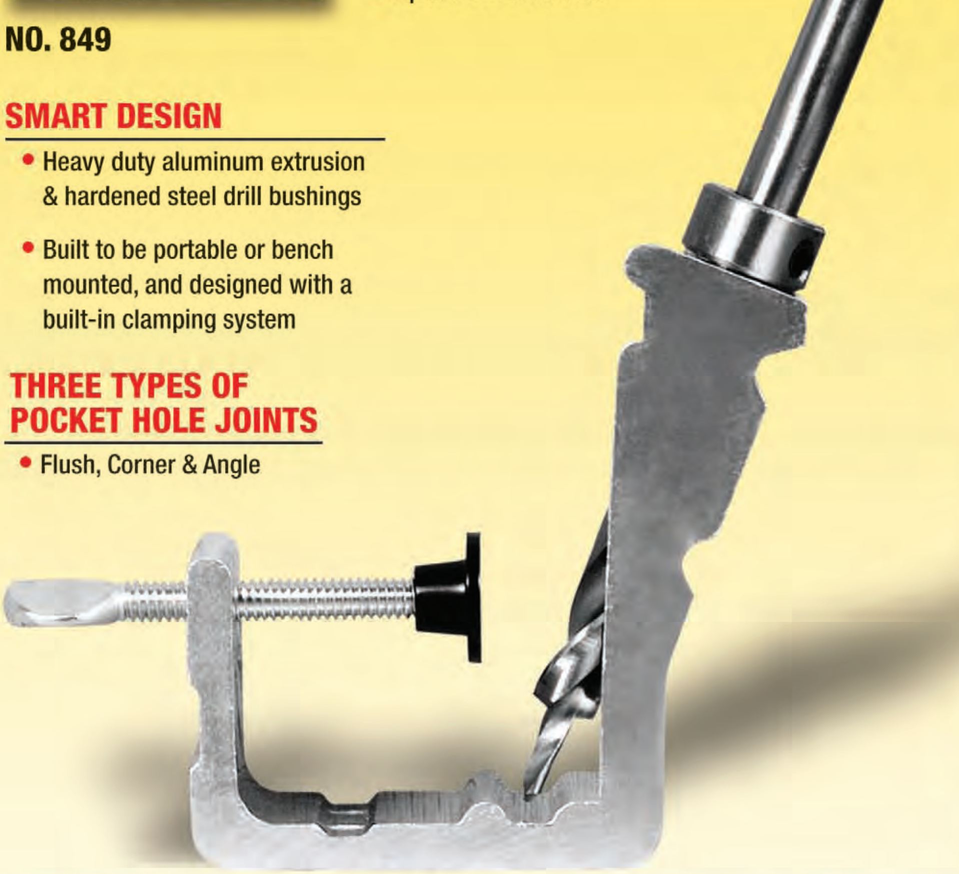

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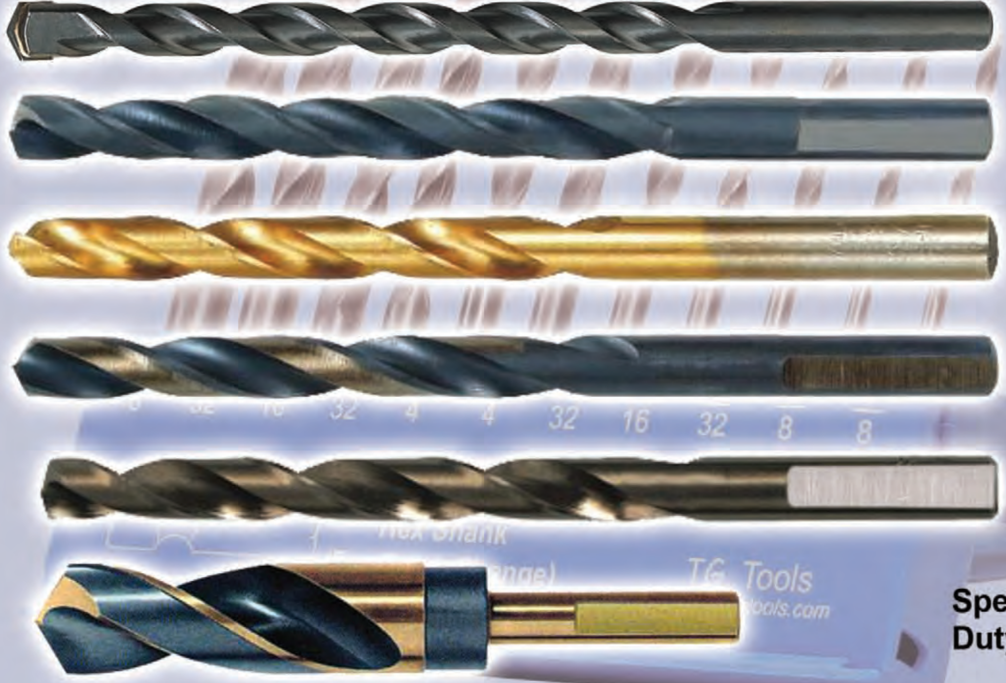

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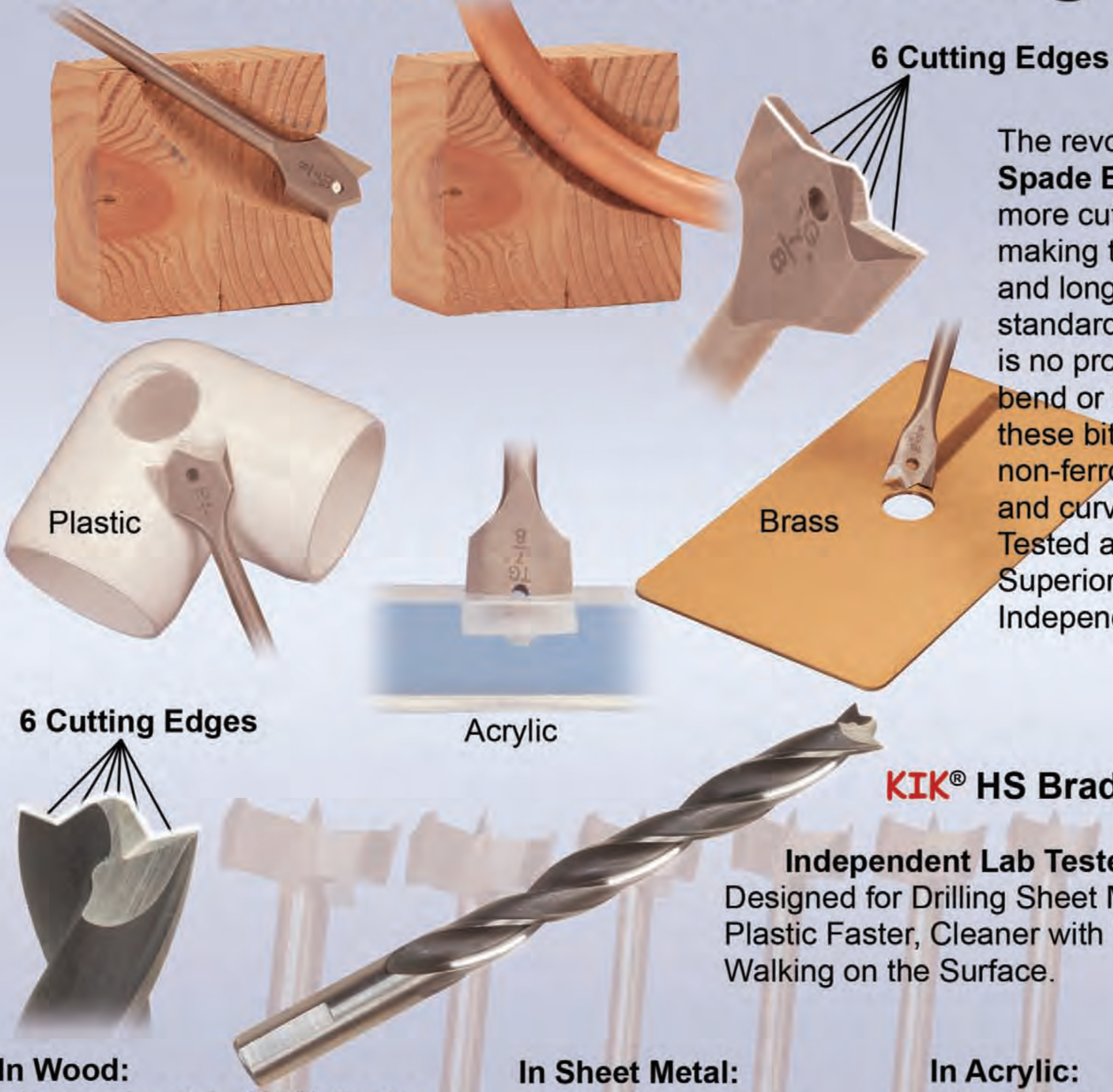

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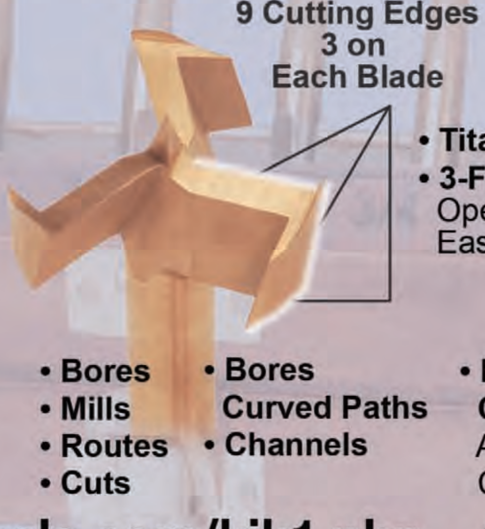

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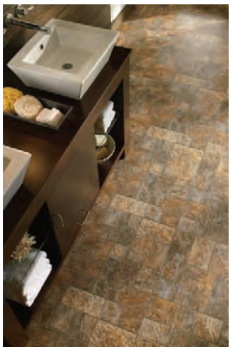

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LETTER

From The Editor-In-Chief

Working with wood, nails and power tools, DIY'ers can expect their fair share of bumps and bruises. Don't forget splinters, cuts and scrapes. Occasionally things can get even hairier, and professional contractors aren't exempt from accidents, either. In fact, a good contractor friend of mine recently started a fire in a customer's home when he left some chemically drenched rags piled in the corner of an un-conditioned room during the hot Alabama summer. Luckily, tragedy was averted and the fire was extinguished before the house went to ashes, but dangerous mistakes do happen.

Over the past year the *EHT* staff has experienced some close calls of its own. I'll omit the names to protect the guilty, but one of us nearly fell through the ceiling of his house when he stepped between the joists in his attic. Fortunately, his whole body didn't slip through the framing, but he did have a leg-hole to patch in the drywall. Speaking of joists, another staff member fell through the floor of an under-construction deck—a second-story deck, at that (ouch!). That incident required some medical attention. A certain team member thought it wise to work on top of a ladder atop a floating dock. That setup worked fine until the waves hit, and he and the ladder both took a spill. And, a key member of our editorial team inadvertently drilled through a 220-volt live supply line while relocating an HVAC disconnect switch. The electrical charge was powerful enough to weld the drill bit into the end of the drill chuck. Thank heaven for insulated handles.

Believe it or not, I don't point out these mistakes to erode any credibility we may have earned up to this point regarding home-improvement matters. The fact is that when it comes to repairs and renovations, mistakes are bound to happen even with the folks who are very accustomed to "doing it themselves." My point is this: Always stay alert, keep safety first in mind, and never get too comfortable around power tools, electricity, chemicals and all the other hazards you're bound to face in this line of work.

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Bristle Length: .75"
- Prep. surfaces for welding/paint
- Remove: loose paint/stain/rust
- Clean: welds/spark plugs/grill
- Works on metal and wood

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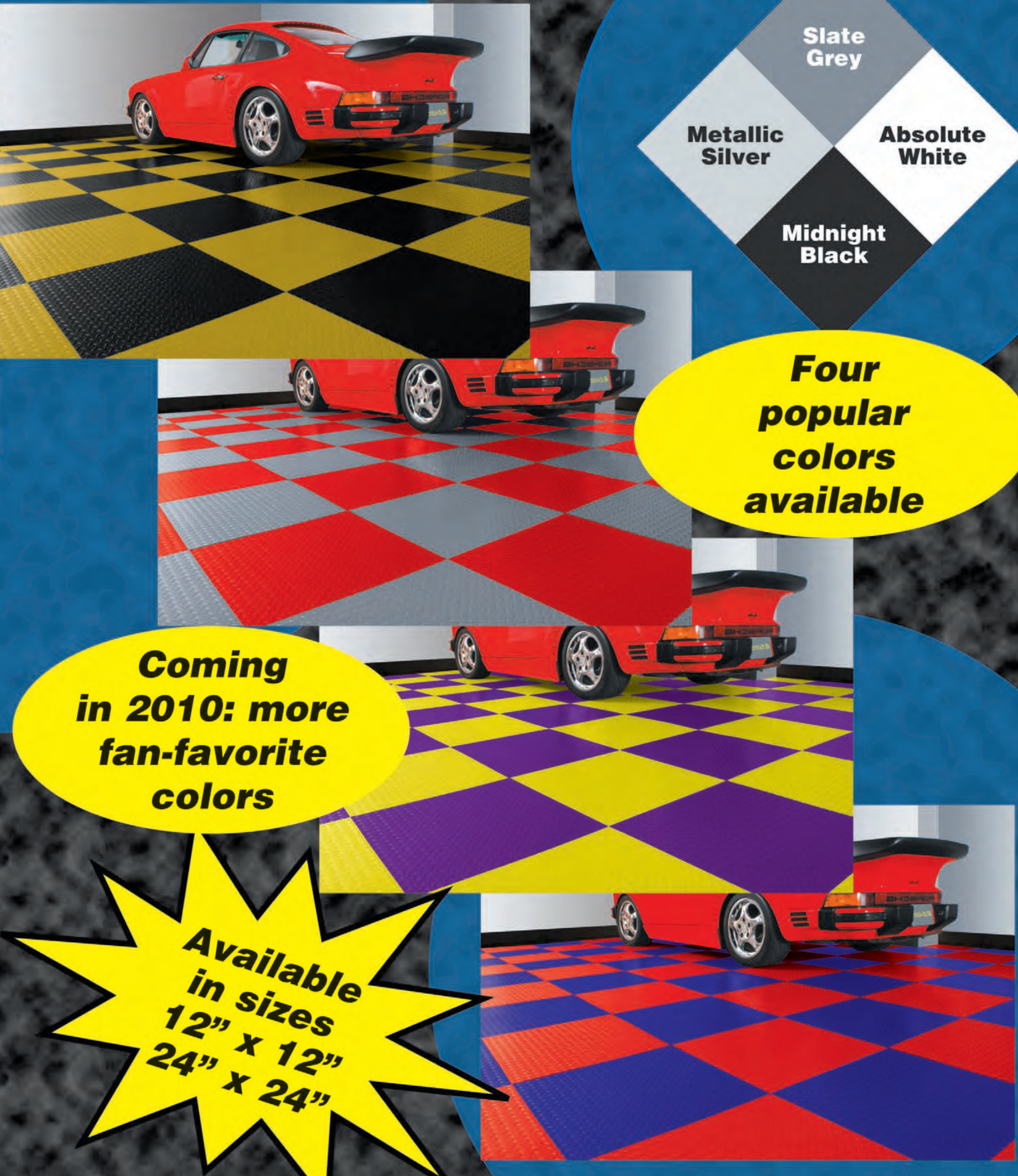

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By Matt Weber

It's a tool crib, it's a laboratory, it's a quiet escape from the visiting in-laws—it's your garage or workshop, the last place in the house that many of us can consider "our very own." Whether you're a hobby woodworker, an avid gardener or the family handyman, a homeowner's garage/workshop is the headquarters of it all. In this issue of *EHT* we highlight some nifty new gadgets and handy home products to help equip your Central Command Post with the supplies you need.

VACMASTER VBV1210

One of the staple tools of most garages and workshops is a wet/dry vacuum cleaner. Powered blowers are nice, too, which makes the new VBV1210 Vacmaster twice as useful as a standard unit. This sleek two-in-one shop vacuum offers an ample 5-horsepower motor that not only sucks up the messiest messes but also converts to a 210-mph leaf blower. The blower detaches from the top of the 12-gallon tank with a simple push of a button, and can be fitted with any of the 11 hose accessories that conveniently store on mounts located above the wheeled feet. The VBV1210 is a lightweight and easily portable unit with a 12-foot power cord and an extra large drain to easily dispose of debris-ridden spills. The new Vacmaster has plenty of muscle in the vacuuming category along with a durable 2-1/4-inch hose, which is nice for cleaning wood chips and other large debris that tend to clog smaller diameter vac hoses. Visit www.vacmaster.com.

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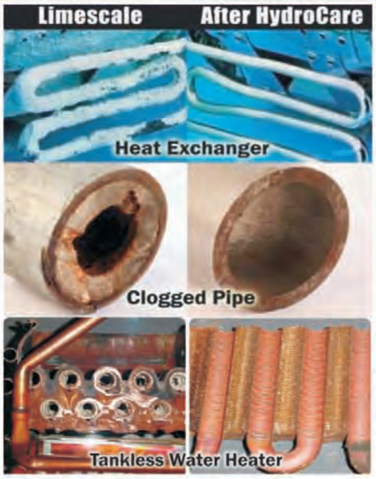

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OIL GRABBER

concrete and asphalt without scrubbing. Shake vigorously before applying, pour it over the stain and spread it with a V-notched trowel or a plastic-bristled brush. As the Oil Grabber dries from liquid to powder it absorbs and lifts the embedded oils. Allow it to dry for 5 to 8 hours, then brush away the powder and rinse with a hose. One quart bottle offers about 6 square feet of coverage. Oil Grabber also removes stains from anti-freeze, brake fluid, cooking oils, diesel fluid, grease, hydraulic fluid, power steering fluid, tar, transmission fluid, tree sap and wax. Learn more at www.krudkutter.com.

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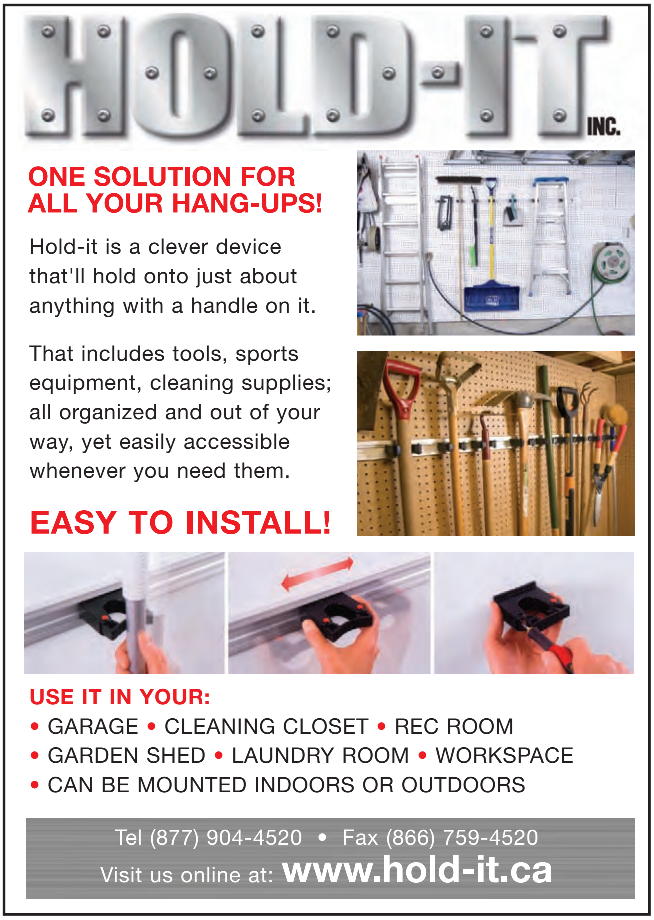
environments like water, oil, gas and gravel. RaceDay Tiles are made from 100-percent solid virgin vinyl for a tough, glossy finished surface that withstands the most demanding conditions from tires, heavy jacks and casters that are constantly being rolled across the flooring. RaceDay Floor Tiles are backed by a five-year warranty and utilize a special adhesive that is as tough as the tiles it binds. Additionally, custom logo printing is optional, as we had done with a certain magazine logo (see photo). Learn more at the Better Life Technology website, www.bltllc.com.

Extreme
How-To

WALL STORAGE PANELS

Slat-wall type wall storage systems are growing in popularity and for good reason: they're versatile, clean-looking and store many tools and supplies conveniently off the floor for easy-to-see organization. Most of these wall-panel systems are made from PVC and are sold under the names HandiWall, FlowWall, StoreWall and the Gladiator GearWall system from Whirlpool—just to name a few. The panels are moisture-resistant and simple to clean, usually available in 4- to 8-foot lengths.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The panels install simply by screwing into the wall studs. Once installed, you can equip the walls with a variety of snap-in accessories, from baskets and shelves to a wide range of hooks. Depending on the accessory, these storage systems are strong enough to store shovels, sledge hammers, string trimmers and more. The FlowWall System in the *EHT* workshop even has a wall bracket strong enough to store a heavy Little Giant Ladder a few feet off the floor.

TROJAN PORTABLE WORK TABLE

Some times you feel like a bench, sometimes you don't. The WT-2438 Portable Work Table from Trojan Manufacturing takes about five seconds to unfold and is one of the most stable, portable benches available. When set up, the WT-2438 stands at a comfortable 35 inches high—convenient for all types of jobsite tasks. The 24-by-38-inch table top is made of 5/8-inch plywood with a medium-density overlay. The wood surface overhangs the

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metal frame to make it easy to clamp down projects, and the bench is sturdy enough to support a vise or to be used as a platform when hand-sawing material. The frame is made of rugged 1-inch square steel tubing and has folding legs that lock quickly in place with the simple motion of a single cross-member. Knock it down for transport, and you're on the move in seconds with the compact, 5-inch thick unit in hand—thin enough for out-of-the-way storage. Available for less than $200, the WT-2438 is made in the USA, weighs under 40 pounds and features a powder-coat finish. Visit www.trojantools.com.

TIRE LOFT

Motorheads, off-road fanatics and snowbirds can all have a convenient new place to store extra tires. The Tire Loft is a heavy-duty storage tire rack from HyLoft, powder-coated black or red rack with chrome bars and designed to store off-season, recreational, racing or ATV car and motorcycle tires. HyLoft's Tire Loft features automotive-inspired design, style, color,

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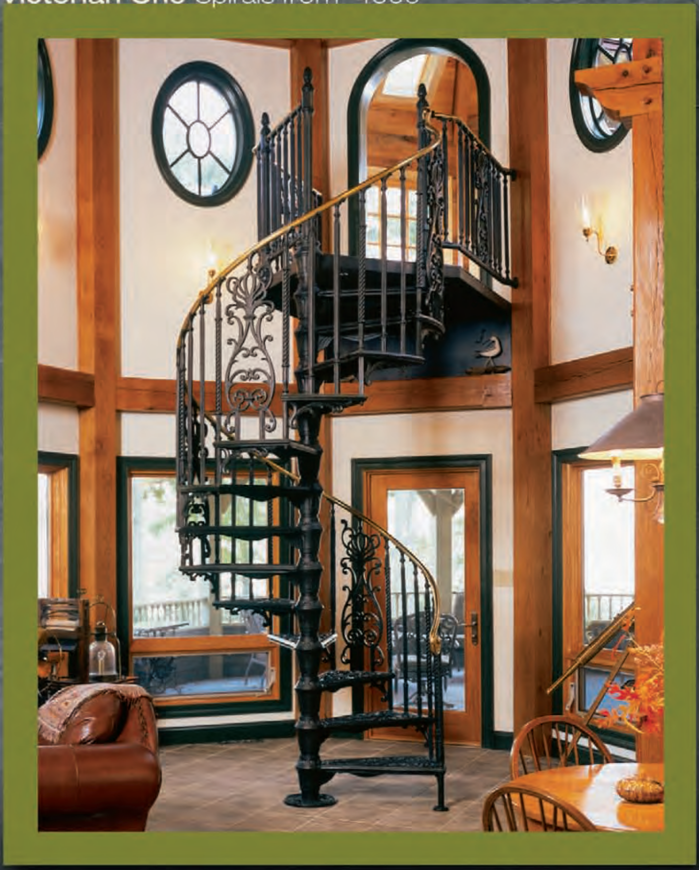

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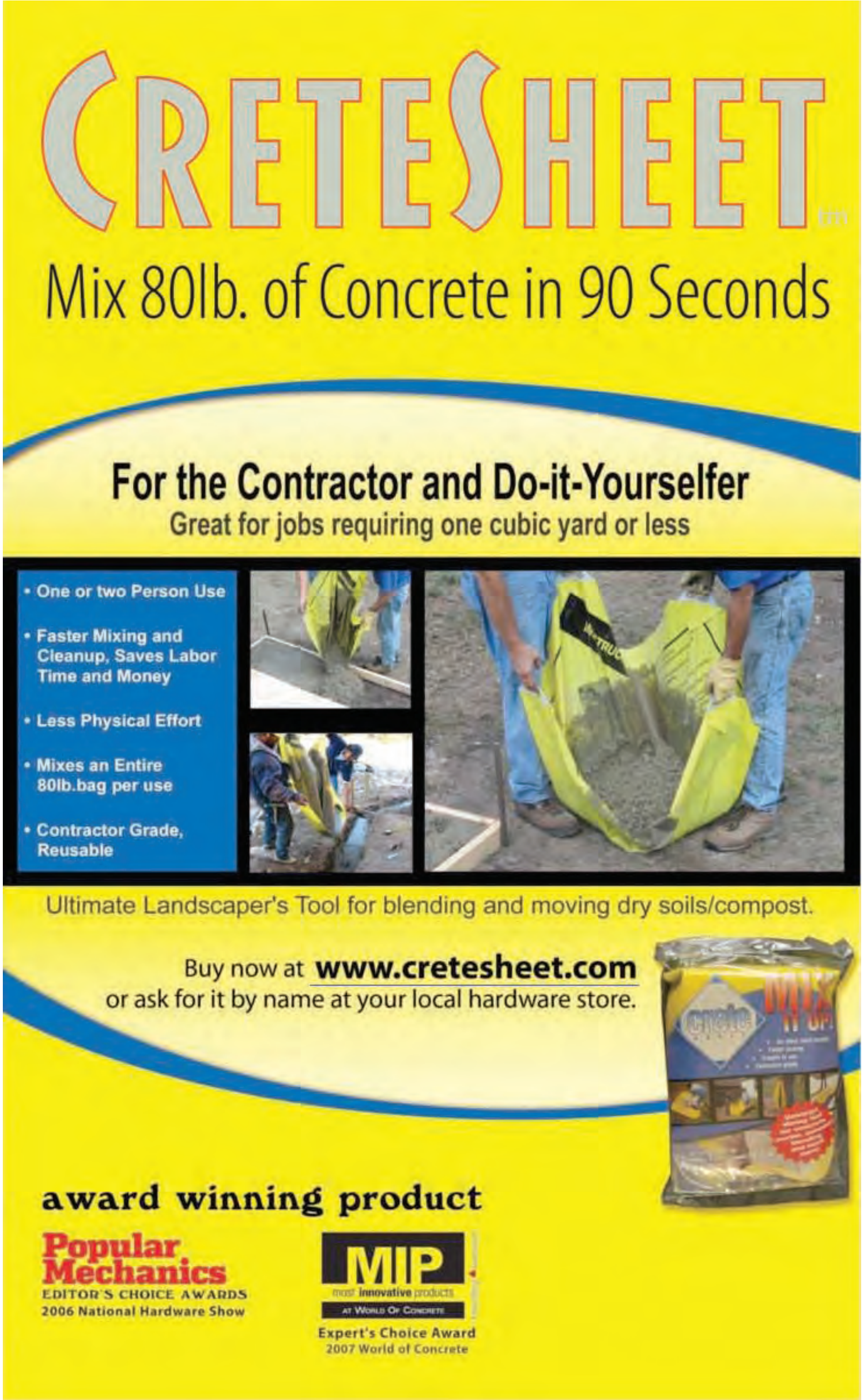
strength and adjustability for different size tires and can hold up to 375 pounds. With telescoping adjustments to 66 inches in width and 28-1/2 inches in length, the Tire Loft gets tires off the floor and within easy reach. Installation is easy, using just four lag screws in the wall studs, and MSRP is $89.95. Learn more at www.hyloft.com.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STUCKON TOOLS MAGNETIC BOARDS

StuckOn Tools offers an attractive new concept for storing tools, instruments and shop supplies. The new magnetic boards from StuckOn Tools provide a tool-organization system without the need for pegs, tool boxes or old coffee cans. The durable, rust-resistant steel boards feature a powder-coated finish and clean up quickly with a simple wipe of the surface. In addition to boards for general hand tools, StuckOn Tools also offers a Garden Board, a Woman's Board, and even a Large Tool Organizer Strip for items such as rakes and shovels. Visit www.stuckontools.com.

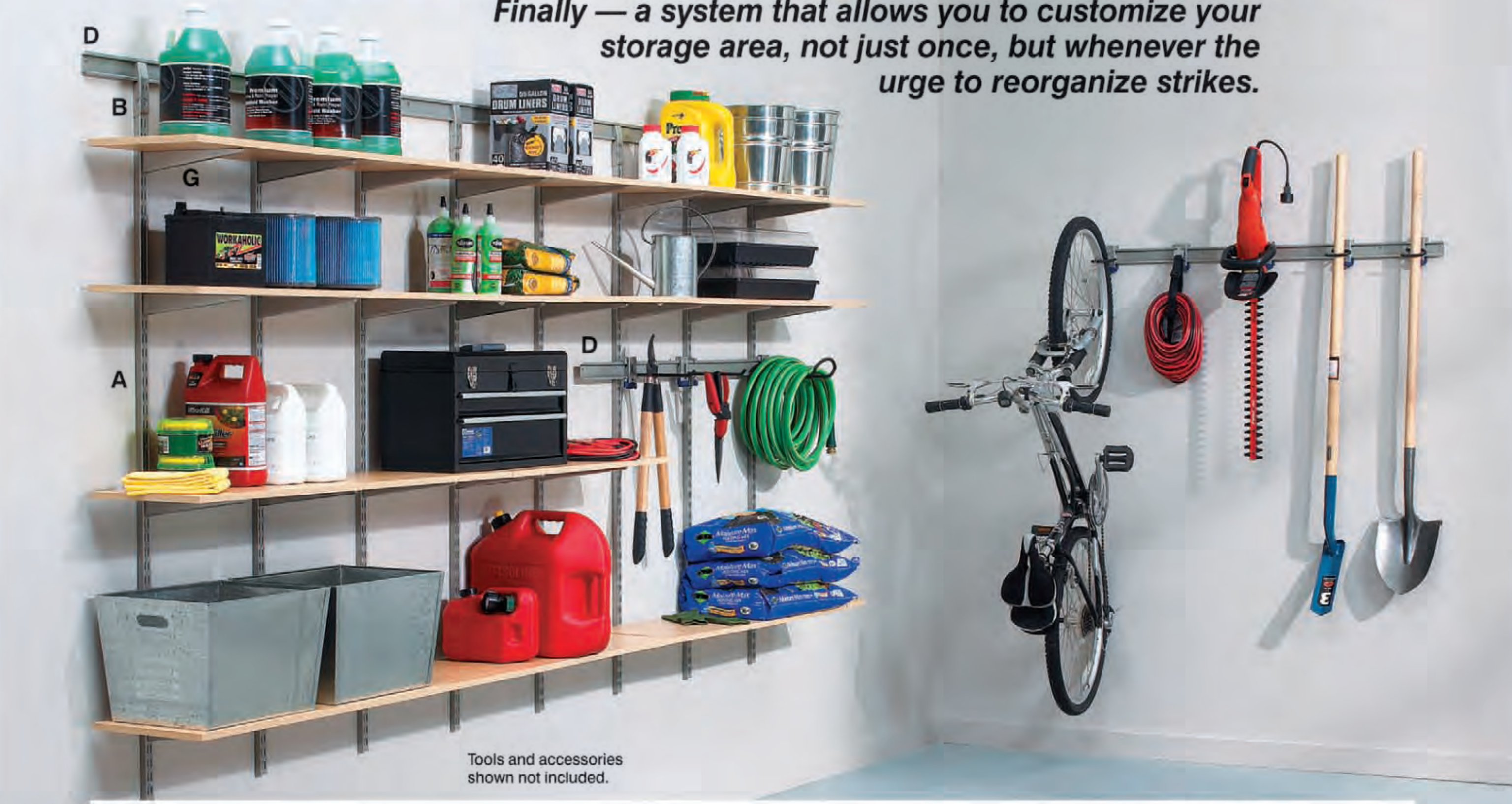
StuckOnTools

GLADIATOR BAMBOO WORKBENCH

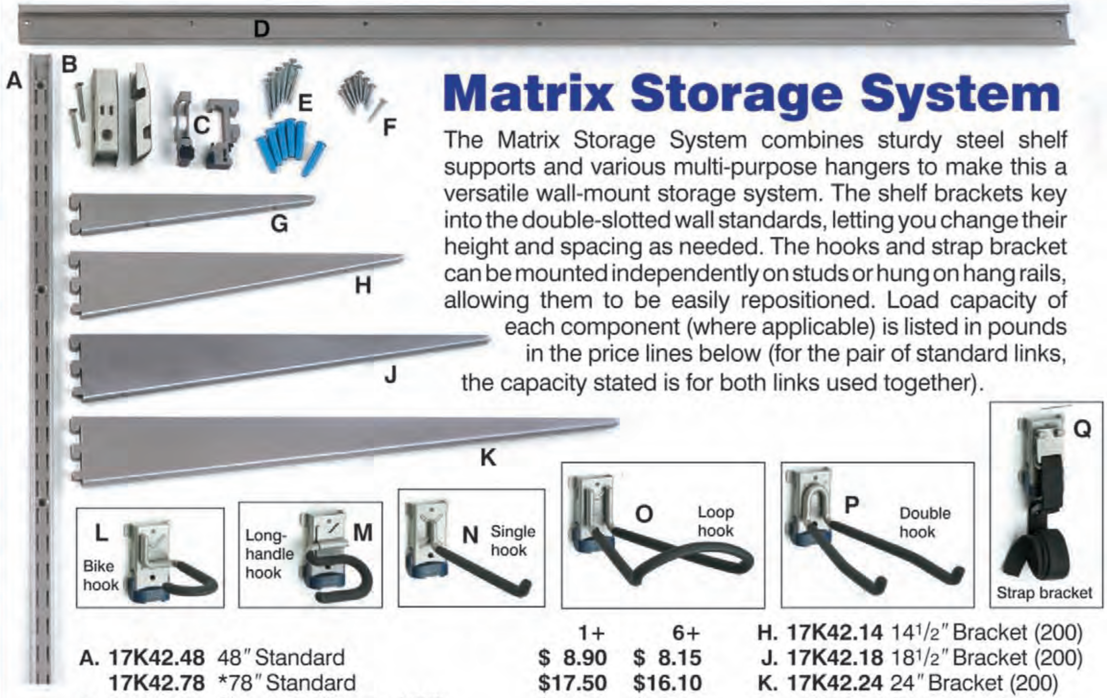
Who wants a wimpy workbench? The new modular workbench from Gladiator Garageworks is made from one of nature's hardest materials—bamboo. Not only does bamboo have incredible strength, but it's a naturally renewable material that's perfect for a sturdy work surface. The 66-1/2-inch Bamboo Modular Workbench has a 1-1/2-inch thick solid bamboo work surface that comes with a multi-layer core and UV-cured protective coating. The tabletop is supported by

Versatile Storage Solutions

Finally — a system that allows you to customize your storage area, not just once, but whenever the urge to reorganize strikes.

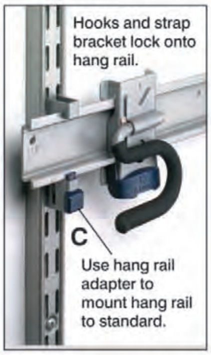


Tools and accessories shown not included.



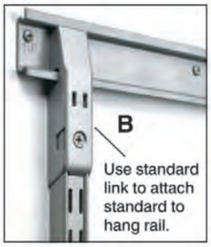
Matrix Storage System

The Matrix Storage System combines sturdy steel shelf supports and various multi-purpose hangers to make this a versatile wall-mount storage system. The shelf brackets key into the double-slotted wall standards, letting you change their height and spacing as needed. The hooks and strap bracket can be mounted independently on studs or hung on hang rails, allowing them to be easily repositioned. Load capacity of each component (where applicable) is listed in pounds in the price lines below (for the pair of standard links, the capacity stated is for both links used together).



Hooks and strap bracket lock onto hang rail.

Use hang rail adapter to mount hang rail to standard.



Use standard link to attach standard to hang rail.

		1+	6+
A. 17K42.48	48″ Standard	$ 8.90	$ 8.15
17K42.78	*78″ Standard	$17.50	$16.10
B. 17K42.41	Standard Link, pr. (900)	$ 5.90	$ 5.40
C. 17K42.42	Hang Rail Adapter (100)	$ 6.90	$ 6.30
D. 17K42.40	48″ Hang Rail (1800)	$13.80	$12.70
E. 17K42.25	Wall-Standard Screws, pkg. of 6	$ 7.90	$ 7.25
F. 17K42.09	Hang Rail Screws, pkg. of 8	$ 2.30	$ 2.10
G. 17K42.10	10½″ Bracket (150)	$ 4.30	$ 3.95
H. 17K42.14	14½″ Bracket (200)	$ 5.40	$ 4.95
J. 17K42.18	18½″ Bracket (200)	$ 7.60	$ 6.95
K. 17K42.24	24″ Bracket (200)	$ 9.50	$ 8.70
L. 17K42.05	Bike Hook (50)	$ 6.90	$ 6.30
M. 17K42.03	Long-Handle Hook (50)	$ 7.60	$ 6.95
N. 17K42.01	Single Hook (50)	$ 6.90	$ 6.30
O. 17K42.04	Loop Hook (50)	$ 8.50	$ 7.80
P. 17K42.02	Double Hook (50)	$ 7.60	$ 6.95
Q. 17K42.06	Strap Bracket (50)	$ 7.60	$ 6.95

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a heavy-duty steel frame and tubular steel legs with angle brackets that support up to 300 pounds. The threaded bolt leveler legs allow height adjustment to compensate for uneven floors, and nylon pads prevent floor stains and corrosion. Visit www.gladiatorgw.com.

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pounds when mounted on wall studs and comes with a 5-year warranty. A variety of panel and strip sizes are available, and the open corners make it easy to run speaker wire or extension cords behind the installed panels. Visit www.alligatorboard.com.

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SPOT LIGHT

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Frame a New Home or Addition for Energy Efficiency

Anyone contemplating an energy-efficient room addition or building their own home has likely given careful thought to the insulation. Which material is best? What thickness should be used? Is the R-value sufficient? But often they ignore the structural framing, which holds everything together. It doesn't matter how good the insulation is if air leaks around it; the design and placement of the studs, joists, headers and other framing members affects how well the insulation can do its job.

Framing techniques your grandfather didn't know, and your dad may not have taught you, can help reduce heating and cooling costs—and use less wood. The trick is to lay out the framing in ways that help eliminate gaps in the insulation and that lessen the number of thermal bridges through the framing members. While not difficult to build, these methods require advanced planning. Your building material dealer may be able to assist with software that can turn a basic home plan into detailed drawings showing energy-efficient framing.

ADVANCED FRAMING METHODS

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) developed so-called "advanced framing" methods (also known as "optimum value engineering" or OVE) several decades ago. Don't let the names frighten you. The practices are relatively straightforward, just different from how framing is traditionally constructed. They include(Figure 1):

- 2 x 6 studs at 24-inch on-center (OC) spacing

- Two-stud corners
- Ladder blocking at wall junctions
- Double rim board and insulating foam in lieu of headers
- In-line framing
- Single top plate
- Minimal trimmers or jack studs

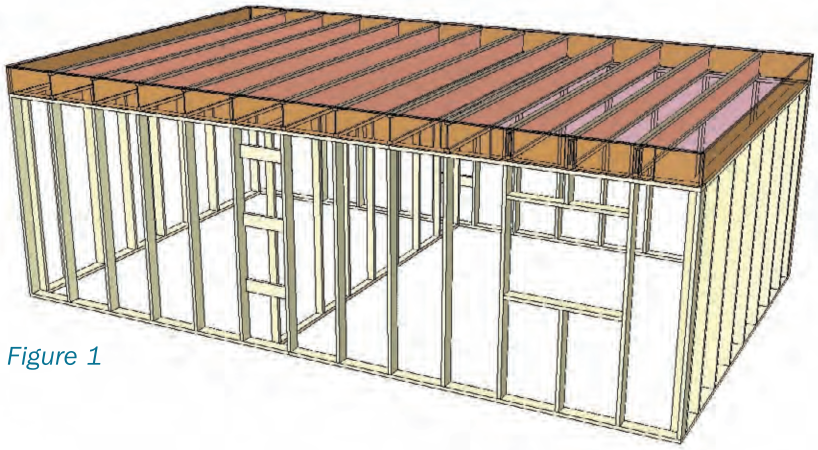

Figure 1

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As an example of the potential benefits of these methods, iLevel by Weyerhaeuser built a 24-inch OC demonstration wall with 2 x 6 studs that achieved an 86-percent increase in insulation volume and a 58-percent increase in the wall's overall R-value, compared to a traditional 2 x 4 wall at 16-inch OC spacing. Further, the demonstration wall used 8 percent less wood volume. The U.S. Dept. of Energy estimates that advanced framing can reduce annual heating and cooling costs up to 5 percent, and for a 2,400-square-foot house, save up to $1,000 in materials.

2 X 6 STUDS AT 24-INCH OC SPACING

Increasing stud spacing from the standard 16 inches OC to 24 inches increases the overall insulation in the wall cavity, as well as reduces the thermal bridges through the wood since fewer sticks are involved. Interestingly, the use of 2 x 6's at 24 inches OC versus 2 x 4's at 16 inches on center provides the necessary structural support using a similar volume of framing material. Yet, the wider spacing enables fewer interruptions in the insulation, while the deeper studs allow for two more inches of insulation between the outside and inside walls.

As with all advanced framing techniques, be sure to check local code requirements. In some instances, wider stud spacing is not allowed in areas with high winds or earthquakes. Your building material dealer or manufacturer may be able to assist with alternative framing approaches, such as pre-fabricated wood shear braces that can provide the necessary bracing while maintaining a narrow footprint within the wall.

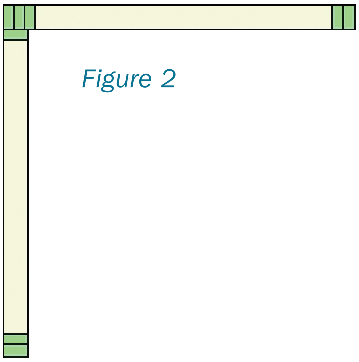

Figure 2

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TWO-STUD CORNERS

Corners typically involve three studs set back-to-back to create nailing points for the exterior sheathing or siding and interior drywall (Figure 2). However, using two studs placed perpendicular to one another provides the necessary structural support, while enabling attachment of the sheathing (Figures 3 and 4). For the drywall, one of the studs provides the nailing point for the material on one wall, and the material for the intersecting wall is attached with a drywall clip. This approach allows insulation to penetrate farther into the corner, instead of leaving gaps and a large thermal bridge created by multiple studs. Plus, it saves on material by eliminating one extra stud at each corner.

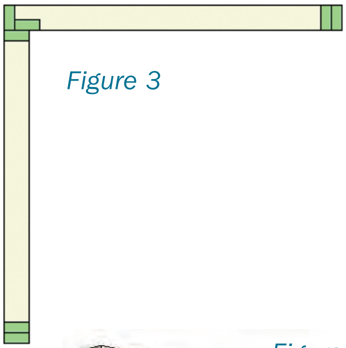

Figure 3

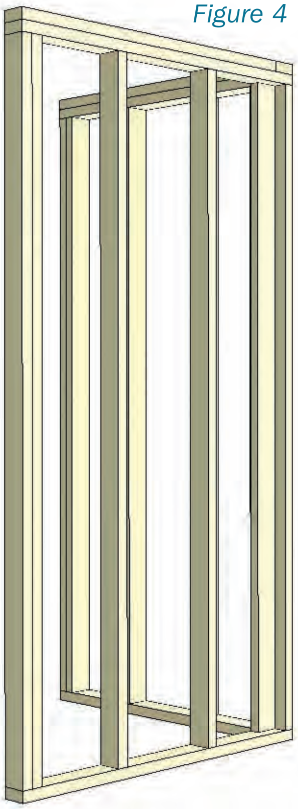

Figure 4

LADDER BLOCKING AT WALL JUNCTIONS

Where interior and exterior walls meet at "T" intersections, extra studs are usually added to provide a nailing surface to join

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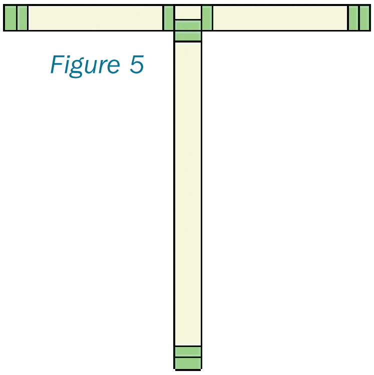

Figure 5

the walls (Figures 5 & 6). The drawback is this creates narrow spaces along the exterior wall that are difficult to insulate effectively. The gaps are either too thin to place insulation in, providing a clear path for air to leak from the home, or require the insulation to be cut to a narrower width, which creates voids. As with three-stud corners, the additional studs on the exterior wall where it connects to the interior wall add to the thermal bridging.

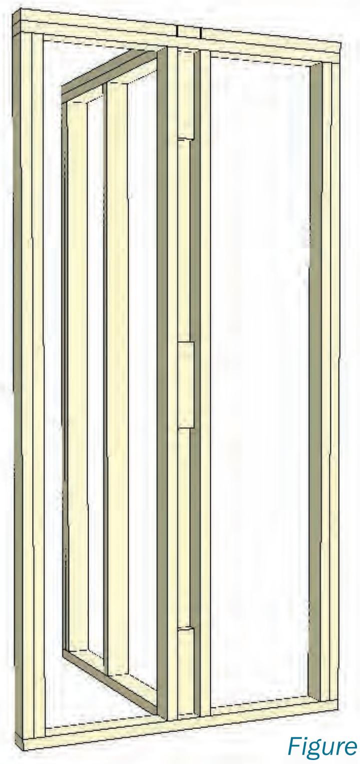

Figure 6

An effective solution is installing horizontal lumber pieces between studs to provide the attachment point for the intersecting wall, resulting in a “ladder”-like appearance (Figures 7 and 8). Scrap lumber can be used for this blocking, helping reduce overall material costs and using pieces that would otherwise end up in the dumpster.

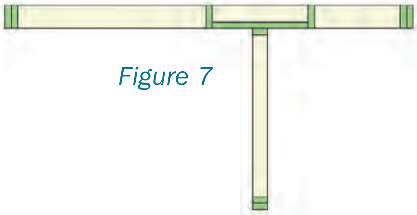

Figure 7

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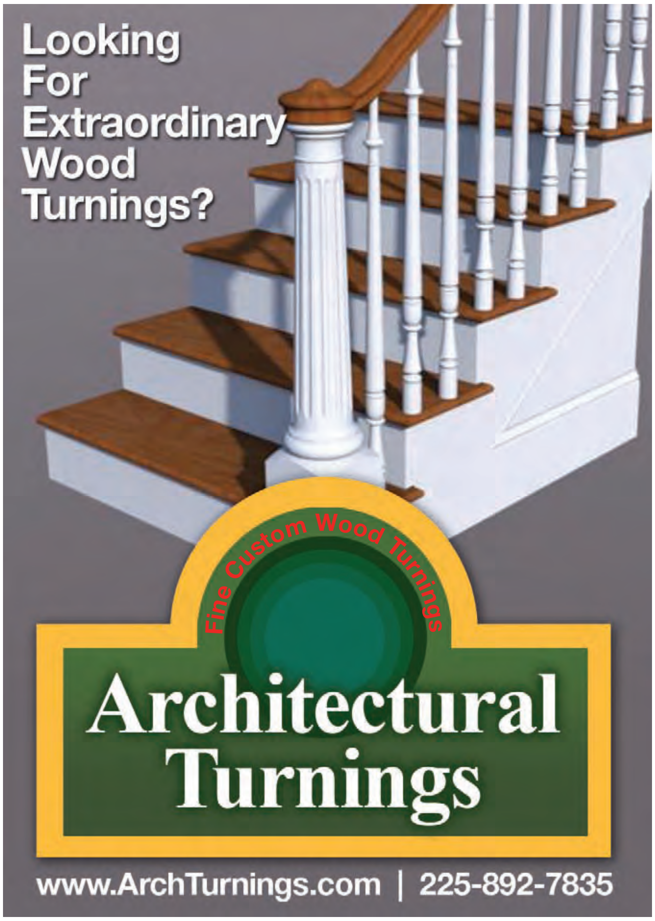

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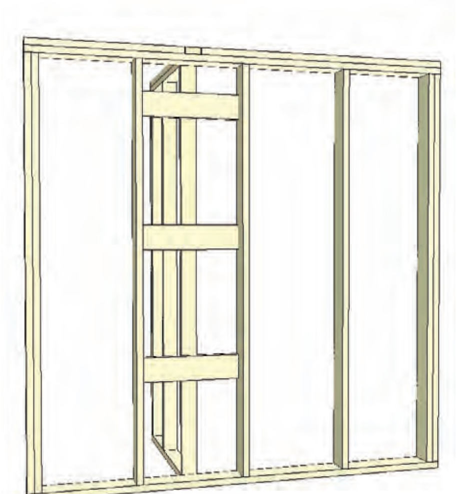


Figure 8

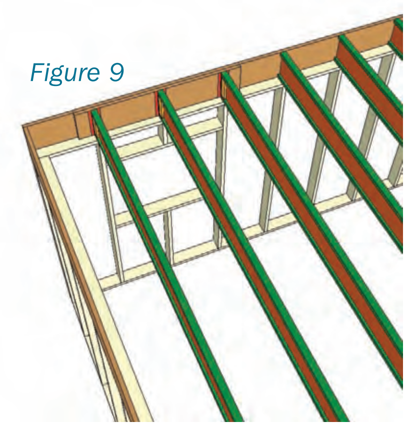
This approach allows the full width of insulation to be placed between the exterior wall studs. This is particularly effective if 2 x 6 studs are used in the exterior wall since there are still several inches of depth behind the ladder blocking for insulation.

DOUBLE RIM BOARD AND INSULATING FOAM IN LIEU OF HEADERS

In some cases, door and window headers may not be structurally necessary, especially for interior, non-load-bearing walls. They may also be able to be sized smaller, or removed in some exterior walls. These are difficult judgments and calculations to make, but your building material dealer may have access to structural frame design software that can determine if a header is needed and avoid over-sizing it, while ensuring a sound structure. If in doubt, consult a structural engineer.

Addressing headers in exterior walls is important because they create a large thermal bridge for heat to escape. You may be able to eliminate headers by using a double thickness of rim board along the top of the wall (Figure 9). Adding 1/2-inch-thick insulating foam to the outside face of the rim provides an effective and simple barrier against heat gain and loss. Laminated strand lumber (LSL) rim board such as TimberStrand

Figure 9



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LSL works well for such applications since it is strong, dimensionally stable and warp-resistant.

An added benefit is that without a header, there is additional space for insulation above the window or door.

IN-LINE FRAMING

Also called "stack framing," in-line framing is a building method where studs, roof trusses and floor joists are all aligned at the same spacing. Because loads transfer directly downward from member to member, this can help reduce or eliminate headers and other materials (see "single top plate" discussion below for one such efficiency).

An added benefit for pride of craftsmanship is that the framing looks more orderly and well planned. Of course it will soon be covered up by exterior and interior finishes, but you will know you have done a good job inside and out.

Another effective practice is modular construction in which the entire addition or home is designed to 2-foot increments. Sizing the structure to match the framing member size helps eliminate scrap from all types of framing members and sheathing stock and can be an effective way to help reduce material costs.

SINGLE TOP PLATE

If in-line framing is used, it may be structurally sufficient to use one, instead of two, top plates. The reason is that the loads from the roof members go straight down through the top plate into the wall studs. In essence, the top plate becomes a transfer point for the load, instead of a primary carrying member. As with headers, this is another instance where structural frame design software can help determine what is structurally appropriate. Be sure to consult code requirements for attaching the top plate at joints, corners and wall intersections to ensure lateral load transfer through the wall lines.

MINIMAL TRIMMERS OR JACK STUDS

Jack studs/cripple studs typically are not necessary when headers are not used, which helps reduce materials and thermal bridges. The challenge can be a narrower nailing surface for siding and trim. If the nailable area is too small, a compromise can be to add a 2 x 2 nailing block (scrap wood works well) to the outside edge of the window or door opening.

PLAN CAREFULLY FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Building an energy-efficient home or addition starts on the inside. Carefully planning the framing and insulation can help provide a tighter home that can save up to hundreds of dollars per year in heating and cooling costs. Plus, advanced framing techniques can help reduce material costs as well as dumpster fees since less wood is needed overall and because scrap can be used in places such as ladder blocking.

As with any project where structural design or construction is involved, consult a qualified design professional or engineer, and comply with all applicable building codes.

To get started, contact your building material dealer or framing product manufacturer for information on the design tools and support they offer. **EHT**

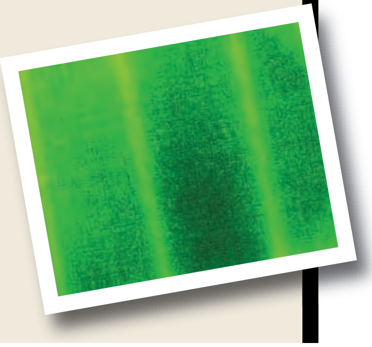
Editor's Note: *Gregg Shea is the division technical support manager and John Stewart is a structural frame specialist for iLevel by Weyerhaeuser. iLevel offers a range of structural framing materials, technical support and software, including Javelin® design software. www.iLevel.com, 888-453-8358.*

DRYWALL DECISIONS

***Extreme How-To* Blog guru, Hal Jones, posed a good question regarding drywall installation over 24-inch stud spacing, as suggested in this article: Are there any important considerations of which DIY'ers should be made aware when hanging panels on studs spaced greater than 16 inches?**

The answer is "maybe." You may have to upgrade the thickness of your drywall panels. Steer clear of 3/8-inch drywall and thinner panels in these applications to avoid sagging. Half-inch drywall can be installed on 24-inch OC framing, unless the panels are hung with their long edges parallel to the ceiling joints. Like 1/2-inch drywall, 5/8-inch thick drywall can be hung on 24-inch stud centers unless it is hung horizontally. The extra thickness improves resistance to sagging and absorbs more sound. In some areas, 5/8-inch drywall is required because of its superior fire resistance.

Check out the *EHT* Blog at http://blog.extremehowto.com.



PLANNING FRAMING WITH SOFTWARE

If advanced framing offers greater energy efficiency and reduced materials, you may ask why it is taking decades for it to be adopted. The primary reason is builders know and trust the old methods. They have been passed down from generation to generation, and they work. With fewer sticks used in advanced framing, there is an obvious visible difference, which can create the perception that the home is not as stable. In reality, much of traditional framing is redundant, but you can't start removing materials without due consideration. Structural frame design software can provide the peace of mind that the home is adequately designed for all necessary loads, while providing a straightforward way to implement advanced framing.

Fortunately, you do not need to be a software expert to make use of these tools. A design technician at your building material dealer can take basic plans or sketches and work up a detailed framing plan showing the placement of every member. They can provide plan printouts and material lists, as well as show you on screen a 3-D rendering that allows viewing of the frame from all angles. These plans can be shared with your building design professional for review and approval.

In addition to supporting advanced framing techniques, programs such as iLevel Javelin design software enable designers to solve potential building conflicts before construction begins. This helps eliminate rework in the field when you discover problems like a misplaced drop beam or column that is too short. The software allows for design of walls, floors and roofs as an integrated system, and accurately tracks gravity (vertical) loads from the ridge to the sill plate to help ensure a strong and stable structure.

The program also provides the flexibility to meet local building requirements and practices, as well as evolving standards. For example, in 2011 the U.S. Dept. of Energy (DOE) is scheduled to release Energy Star for Homes Version 3, which includes requirements for advanced framing (applicable to projects seeking an Energy Star rating). Designers can readily incorporate these and other optional or mandated standards.

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By Mark Clement

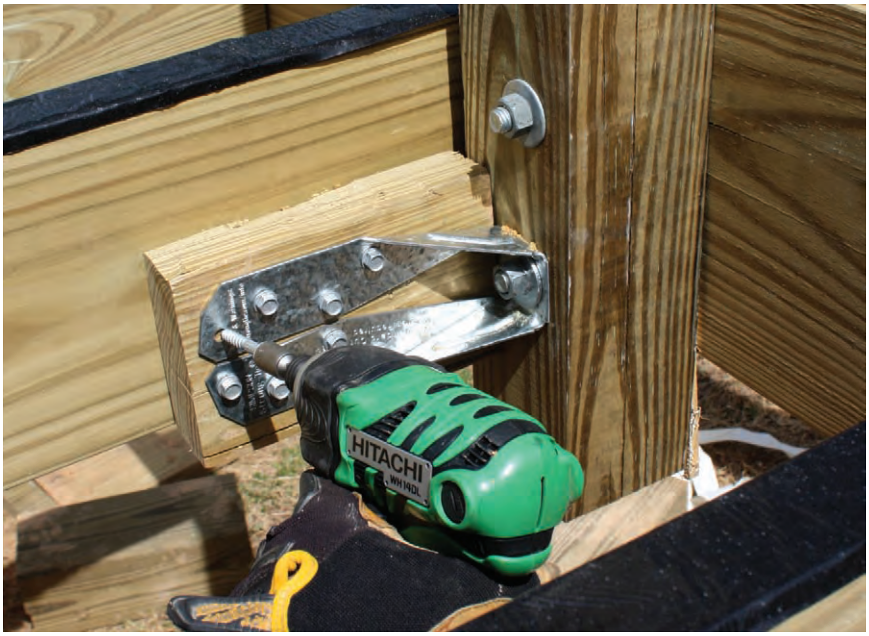
Decorative accessories take a wooden deck handrail to the next level.

Constructing a deck gives the builder ample opportunity to customize it with a personal touch. The deck shown in this article was built from pressure-treated lumber and stained to match the fence that surrounded the back yard. However, when it came to the railing system, I decided to incorporate some different materials and construction methods to give the design some extra flair. As with any major project, consult local building codes for specific requirements in your area.

STRONG POSTS

To build any handrail system you must start with a strong foundation. For the posts I used 4-by-4's stained to match the deck. When installing the posts, *EHT* recommends using a minimum of two 1/2-inch galvanized through-bolts with washers driven through the framing and the full 4-inch thickness of the post (rather than notching the post, which weakens it). To bolster this connection, we also recommend using a post-to-deck metal bracket, such as that manufactured by Simpson Strong-Tie or Deck-Lok. These metal brackets fasten to the through-bolts and connect flush to an adjacent framing member with galvanized screws. If the posts don't line up next to an adjacent joist then you may have to install blocking to provide a fastening surface. Using the metal brackets takes a little more time, money and effort, but this stronger connection will ensure the posts stay safe and sturdy.

The posts must be at least



When installing handrail posts, EHT recommends using a minimum of two galvanized 1/2-inch through-bolts with washers. A metal post-to-deck bracket will reinforce this connection even further.

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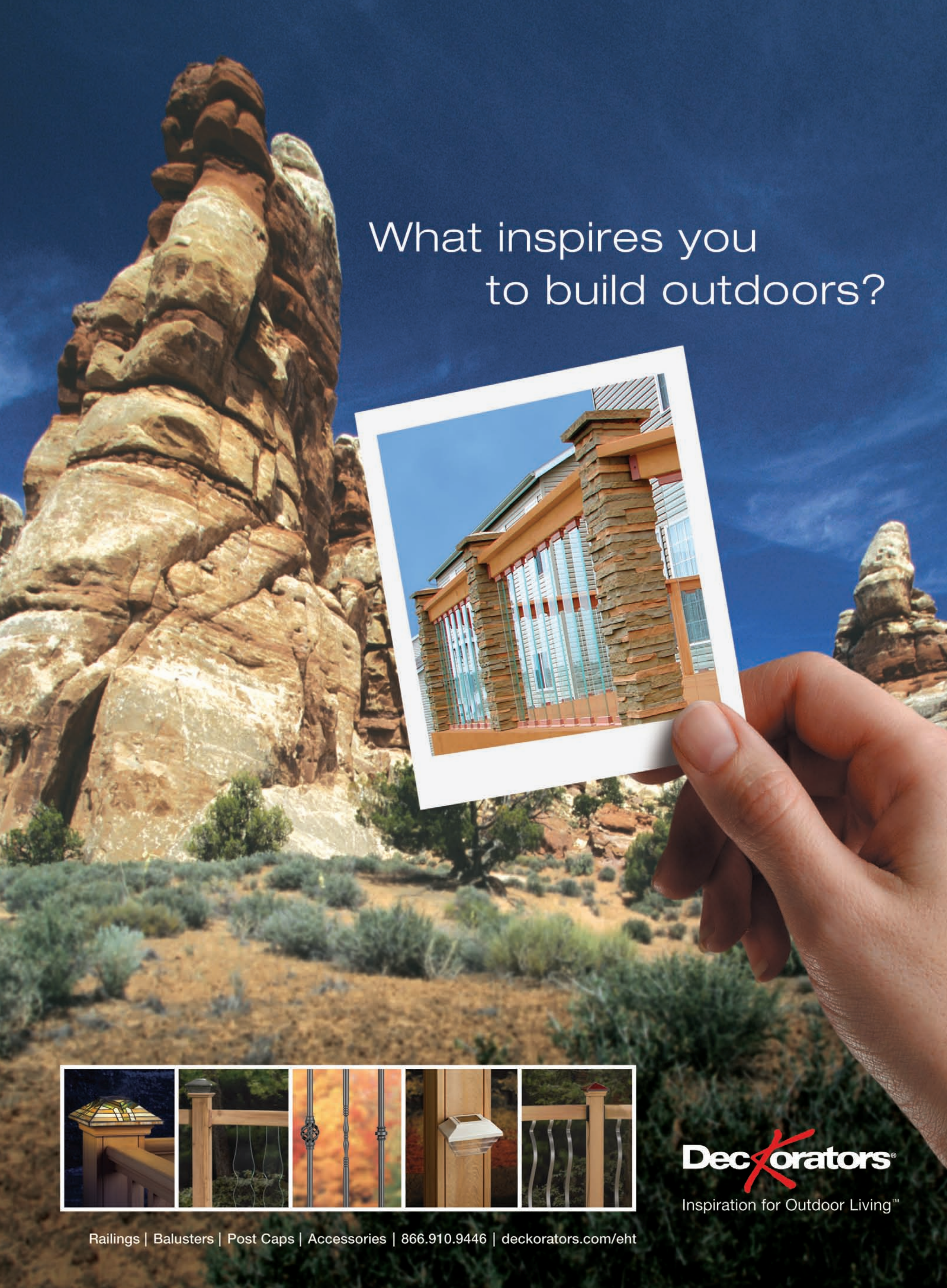
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Measure carefully the handrail length between posts. If using Deckorators Railing Connectors, subtract 1/2" from the measurement and cut to size.

36 inches high and spaced no more than 6 feet apart.

Once the deck boards were installed, I finished the bottoms of the posts with traditional Post Base Trim by Deckorators. This profiled wooden trim piece slips over the 4-by-4 posts and glues in place to conceal the gaps between the deck boards and post.

HANDRAILS

For the design of this system I didn't want to stray very far from the stained wood, which was my primary visual theme. So I used 2-by-4's for the handrails and stained them to match the posts and decking. (Note: As you'll see in the accompanying photos, I installed the first two rails prior to staining. It occurred to me afterward that it would be easier to stain the remaining handrails on a couple of sawhorses before installing them).

It's acceptable to fasten through the face of the 2-by-4 rails and into the interior face of the posts using 2-1/2-inch galvanized screws, but toe-nailing is

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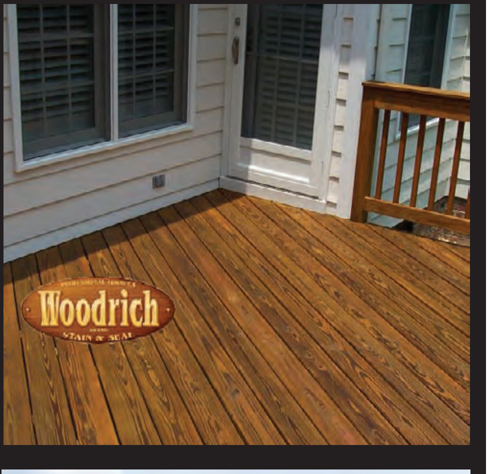

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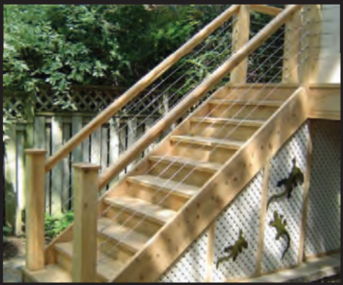

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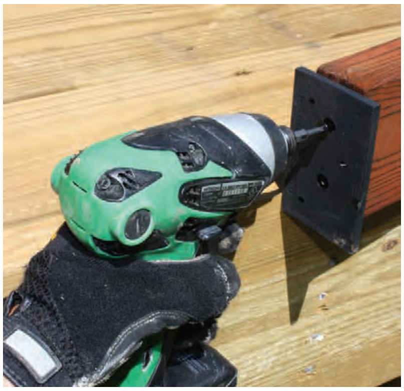


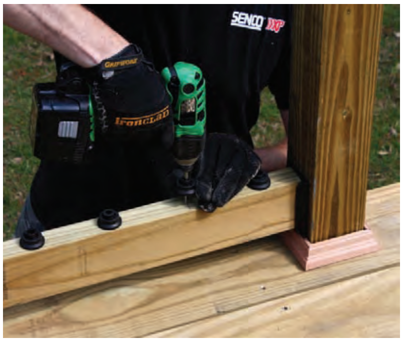
Screw on the plastic Railing Connector, and fasten the lower rail between the posts.

not a good approach, as the connection can easily weaken over time.

As an alternative, I installed the handrails using Deckorators Railing Connectors. These durable plastic brackets make it easy to install the rails flush between the posts, but with much more holding power than toe-nailing and a cleaner finished appearance with no visible gaps. This also helps prevent the rail from splitting. Just zip two screws through each connector and into the ends of the rails to attach them. The connectors then attach the rails to the posts using three screws each, driven through the guide holes at offset angles for a firm connection.

DECORATIVE BALUSTERS

Another sleek design element for this handrail system was the incorporation of aluminum balusters. Whereas purchased wood balusters tend to twist and warp over time, the aluminum balusters will never distort from weather exposure, nor will they rust or develop mold. Universal Forest Products, Inc., offers the Deckorators line of balusters in a wide array of styles and colors—even glass—with a lifetime warranty. For this project, I



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REAL CEDAR
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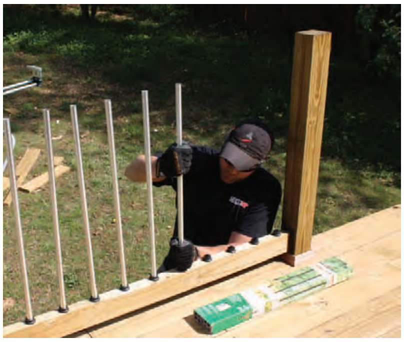
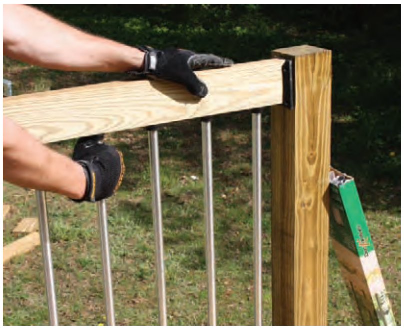
selected the "Classic" cylindrical style of aluminum baluster in a stainless finish.

I installed the balusters on the handrails using the Deckorators Designer Baluster Connectors. The connectors are rubber boots that provide a sturdy connection and a molded look to the balusters. Additionally, certain types of treated lumber are known to corrode aluminum, and the rubber connectors provide a barrier between the aluminum and the chemicals in the wood. To install this system, it's necessary to install the baluster connectors before installing the rail between the posts.

Measure the railing opening from post to post to determine the length of the railing section. Subtract 1/2 inch from that measurement to allow room for the two 1/4-inch thick railing connectors, and cut the top and bottom rails to size. Clamp the rails together. Mark the top and bottom rails 4-1/2 inches on center, beginning at the center of the rails. Use the stainless steel screws included with the baluster



Slide the aluminum balusters onto the rubber baluster connectors.



Carefully seat the connectors of the upper rail onto the ends of the aluminum balusters, and fasten the rail securely.

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FORMULA

It occurred to me after beginning this project that it would be easier to stain the rails prior to installation rather than afterward.

connectors to fasten the rubber boots on each mark. Once the balusters are installed, their spacing measures less than 4 inches, which is the maximum typically allowed by code.

Place the bottom rail between the posts with the rubber connectors facing up. The Railing Connectors sit right on top of the post base trim, providing two inches of space between the deck surface and the bottom edge of the rail. Center the rail, and fasten the railing connectors securely. Then, slide the round ends of the balusters over the rubber connectors until they are firmly seated on the bottom. Carefully place the top rail over the balusters, making sure each baluster is properly seated inside the upper connectors.

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I glued a 2-by-4 block beneath the center of each bottom rail for extra support.

Repeat the installation procedure for each 6-foot section of railing.

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Activate the Solar Post Lights by removing the plastic tab from the battery terminal.

The post lights mount to the posts with a quality exterior-grade adhesive.

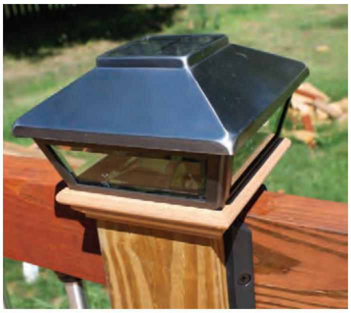
This may require a little encouragement from a rubber mallet.

I then cut a 2-by-4 spacer block to size (2 inches in this case) and glued it flush beneath the center point of the bottom rail to provide extra support from below.

Next, you're ready to rinse and repeat for the next section of handrail.

SOLAR POST CAPS

This handrail was looking mighty handsome, but I didn't stop with the enhancements. The crowing jewel(s) were the stainless Maine Ornamental Solar Post Caps. The good news for the DIY installer is that these decorative post covers provide



The stainless finish of the Maine Ornamental Solar Post Caps complements the stainless finish of the Deckorators balusters. The Maine Ornamental and Deckorators line of products are available in a broad range of materials, colors and styles.

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illumination without the need to run wiring. They lap up energy from the sun during the day, and activate automatically at nightfall.

Activation and installation couldn't be simpler. To activate, simply pop off the metal cover, remove the plastic tab between the solar batteries and their terminals, and slide the little switch to "on." The lights install over the posts with construction adhesive or exterior-grade wood glue. I would suggest checking the lights for level and shimming as necessary until the glue sets.

I topped each post with a Solar Post Cap, and my selection of a stainless finish matched perfectly with the stainless balusters. I was proud of the completed project, as it incorporated real wood, my stain of preference (Sierra Redwood tone from Armstrong-Clark), as well as the stainless aluminum material that gave this deck a unique look unlike anything else in the neighborhood. **EHT**

The deck and handrail system was stained with Armstrong-Clark's wood stain in Sierra Redwood tone to tie all the decorative elements together.

After a full day of sunlight, the solar lights activate automatically at dusk.

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THE VINYL

By Larry Walton

Rolling out a new look in an old standard.

This not your grandma's linoleum. Today's sheet vinyl flooring is available in a large variety of colors, textures and patterns. Often categorized as resilient flooring, sheet vinyl can be a relatively inexpensive alternative to other hard surfaces for kitchens, bathrooms and utility rooms.

Vinyl flooring is available in a variety of grades, which means the choices go beyond cosmetic considerations of color and texture. In general, higher grades of vinyl are thicker, which means stiffer, especially when temperatures are low during the installation process. In fact, if you select a heavy grade of vinyl, we recommend you make a pattern of heavy paper to get the layout as close as possible.

The shinier the floor surface, the more demanding the install. If you select a vinyl with a matte finish, however, it will camouflage more little imperfections such as uneven glue and bumps in the subfloor.

Keep in mind that a strong cross-light source, such as a patio door, will also accentuate ridges and bumps in the floor and may call for more attention during the preparation phase.

SURFACE OPTIONS

Sheet vinyl is usually installed on underlayment, the most common of which is particle board. The advantages of particle board underlayment are its low cost, core consistency and smoothness. On the downside, particle

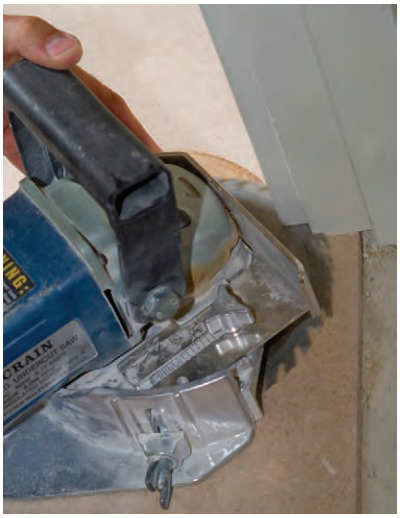
ANSWER

board swells and disintegrates when exposed to water and it lacks structural strength.

Plywood makes a good underlayment, but care must be given that the surface is sanded and smooth. Marine-grade plywood eliminates voids in the interior layers of veneer, which allows it to withstand the occasional high-heeled shoe. Plywood can also withstand getting wet so it can handle plumbing problems or entry door environments. However, vinyl flooring was designed to have water on the surface only.

Concrete also makes a good sub-surface for a vinyl floor if it has been prepped smooth.

Regardless of the surface, it needs to be clean, grease-free and cleared of any above-surface nail and screw heads. The surface must be flat and all holes, cracks and joint lines must be filled. Remove base shoe and baseboards before installing



An undercut saw trims casings and door jambs very close to the floor so the sheet vinyl can tuck under.

About 1/8” is enough gap for most vinyl thicknesses.

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EX.HT9.108

Mixing filler compounds right on the floor saves time and cleanup trouble.

vinyl. Take time to clean the area where the floor meets the wall and watch for debris that likes to hide under the drywall where it can jump under your flooring as you roll it out.

OVERSIZE

Measure and cut the vinyl to approximate size—about one inch oversize all the way around. Roll the vinyl with the top surface on the inside and bring it into the room. Unroll the vinyl to correctly position it in the room, keeping the pattern lines parallel to the longest open wall area. Fold back at least half of the vinyl for gluing.

Using a 3/32-inch notched trowel, spread a thin, even layer of glue on the exposed floor. Unfold the sheet of vinyl over the glued area, being careful to avoid creases and large bubbles (smaller bubbles will be worked out later). The extra material should curve up the wall or toe kick.

Fold the unglued vinyl over the glued half. Be careful not to step on the fold, which could damage

QUICK CLEANUP

Many pros prefer to mix filler compounds right on the floor. Cleanup is quicker and easier because there is no bucket to deal with. Start with a pile of latex-fortified compound. Dig a hole in the center with a trowel. Pour a small amount of acrylic latex mixture in the hole and gradually work the dry mix into the liquid. Add more liquid as needed. Keep stirring with the trowel until the mixture is smooth and ready for use.

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the flooring. Apply glue to the second half of the floor. Be sure to extend the glue to the already-glued area. Unfold the vinyl over the second half of the glued surface.

Work the bubbles from the center out to the edges using a flooring roller, rolling pin, wet rags or your hands.

Trim the edges where the vinyl is ramped up the wall or toe kick until the flooring lies flat. The

Cut the vinyl about one inch extra all the way around. Pay attention to the best locations for full pattern squares as you would with tile floors.

VINYL OVERLAY

When installing vinyl over vinyl, cut away any of the old flooring that is loose or curled and fill voids with a quality filler compound. The entire surface of the old vinyl should be floated with an embossing leveler, because most modern vinyl has a textured surface that will show through the new vinyl without the use of a leveler in the prep process. After the leveler has dried, sand and vacuum the entire surface.

Flooring contractor Kent Miller recommends using a finer tooth trowel for spreading glue on existing vinyl. He also says to allow for some "open time" to let the glue breathe, because glue liquids are not being soaked into the underlayment in this application.

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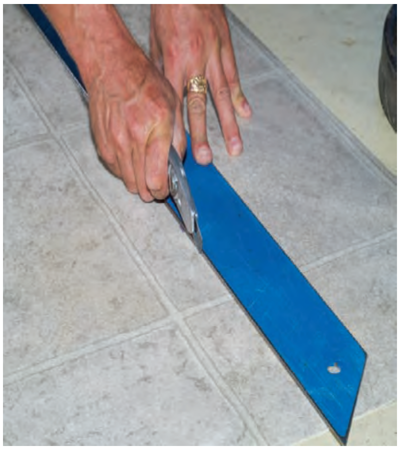
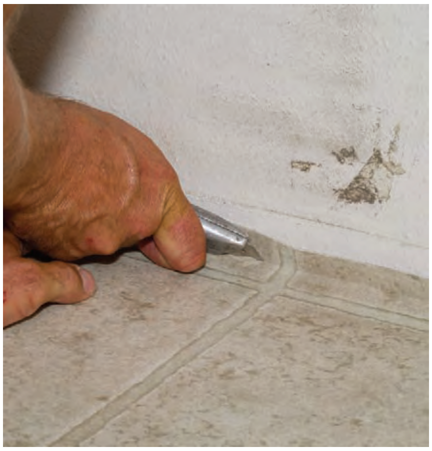
back of a curved vinyl knife can be used to crease the vinyl where the floor meets the wall. This technique will identify a line where the sheet should be cut.

Cabinets usually don't sit directly on the floor but are shimmed for leveling. In this case it's preferable to tuck extra vinyl under the cabinet rather than trim it even with the toe kick.

Clean all residual glue from the floor. After allowing time for the glue to dry, install baseboards and/or base shoe molding. **EHT**



Use a straight edge and a sharp knife to make the initial rough cuts.



When trimming be careful not to cut the material too far away from the wall.

CASING CUT-OFF

It's much easier to tuck vinyl under existing casing than to trim the flooring to the shape of the casing. If the casing is tight on the floor, use an undercut saw or dovetail saw to trim the casing so there is enough room to tuck the flooring underneath.

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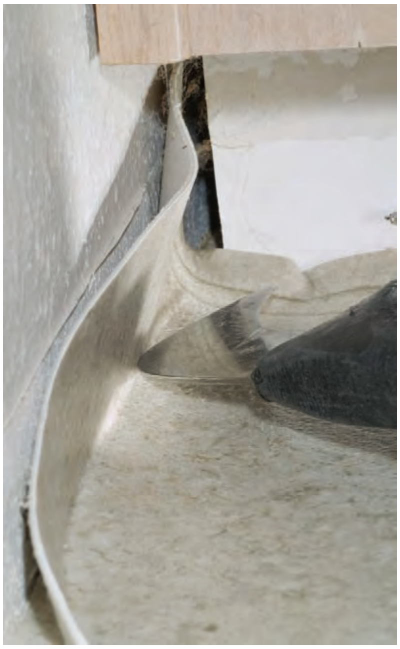
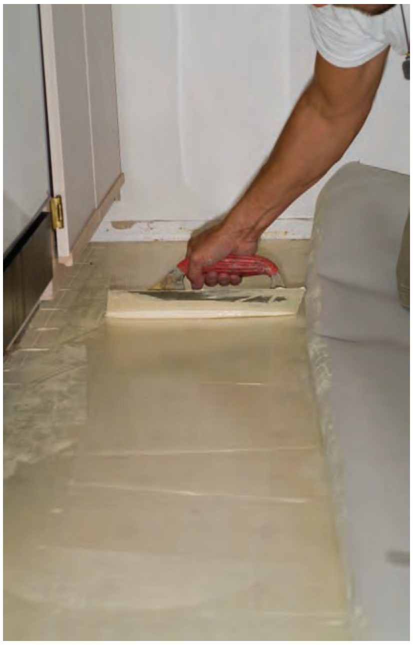

The back of a curved vinyl knife can help you find the point where floor meets wall.


Use a trowel to spread the vinyl adhesive.

Extra vinyl along the cabinet toe-kicks can often be tucked under the cabinets.

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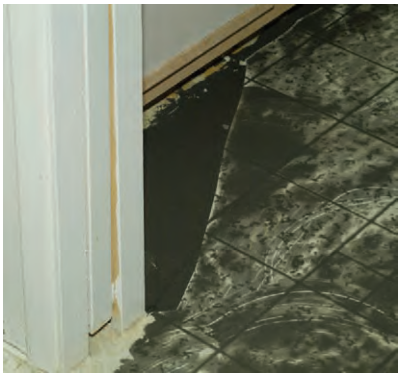
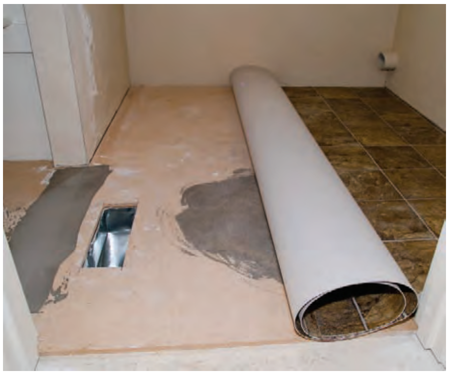
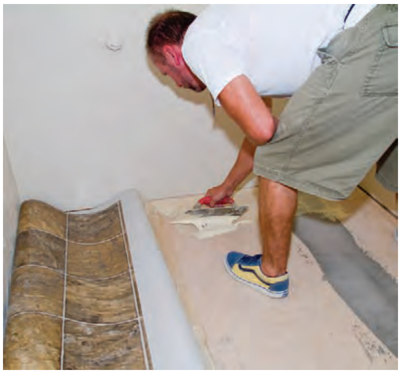


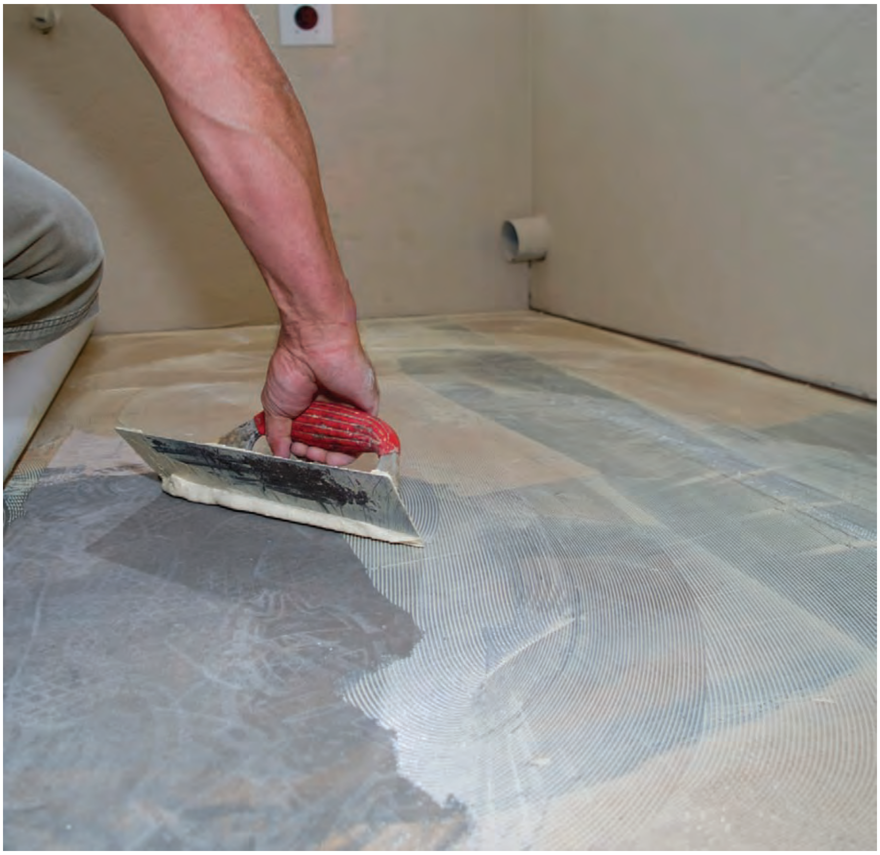
Leveling compounds fill in the embossing in old vinyl patterns, plus they match the elevation in areas where the vinyl is missing.



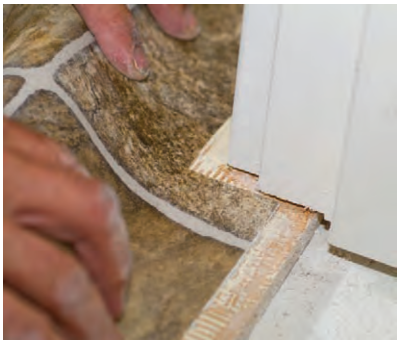
Roll back half of the vinyl sheet. Lay down the first half of the vinyl after spreading glue.



Fold back the unglued vinyl onto the glued half and apply the remaining glue.



You can stand on the flat part of the folded back area but don't get on the fold. A crease will damage the flooring.



Bunch the vinyl back at the door jamb and casing locations to slide the leading edge under. This may take a few tries to get the notches trimmed so the flooring lies flat.

Under-cutting the door trim beats trying to trim the vinyl to fit.

CUT WITH CAUTION

The most common mistake I see in vinyl installations (even by pros) is cutting the material shy of the wall or toe kick during the trim process. Often the installer assumes that if they cut in the bottom of the curved vinyl it will lay in just right, but when it rolls out they find it is 1/2 inch or more away from the wall. It's true that trim will often cover this short-fall but not always. It's better to trim the material more than once to get it to lay flat.

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SAVING MONEY WITH RECLAIMED WOOD

by Monte Burch

Hidden treasures in overlooked places can provide the right wood at the right price for your next project.

My dad ran a custom cabinet and furniture building shop for many years, and I worked for him as a youngster during the summers, as well as full-time years later. Dad was always looking for ways of recycling wood. One job I had was tearing out the maple backstops at a local bowling alley. We ran the boards through a planer, cut them into 1-1/2-inch wide strips and glued the strips back together to create “butcher-block” kitchen countertops. Dad was ahead of his time 50 years ago, and the countertops were really popular. Then there were the old church pews he bought from a church renovation. We made furniture for years from the beautiful walnut wood.

When my pastor daughter asked me to haul off an ancient broken pew from her church, I just had to remove some paint. Guess what? Walnut. About 150 years old, the pew was held together with hand-cut nails. I disassembled the pew, planed the walnut and created a large, lighted cross for the church, along with a sample of the pew seat board, complete with bubblegum.

Reclaiming or recycling wood not only saves money on woodworking projects, but often results in finding more beautiful wood than you can purchase (or afford to purchase) today. Hardwoods, such as walnut, maple and oak were often used in relatively small projects, as well as in building construction. Our 150 year old house is framed in red oak. I discovered an old, timber-framed barn made entirely of walnut. The recycled pew had a walnut seat board, walnut trim and a back board of white pine. The back board was one piece, one-inch thick by 20 inches in width and 10 feet long. You won't find that at your local wood dealer. Other recycling "finds" include: hickory, yellow pine, butternut, beech, maple, cherry, mahogany and chestnut. Even if some of these pieces aren't big enough for furniture or cabinetry, they will create beautiful wood turnings or small projects.

Old paint can be stripped or belt sanded off.

This solid maple, butcher-block countertop was made entirely from reclaimed wood.

LOCATING

Finding recyclable woods is like a treasure hunt. Look for renovating and remodeling jobs, particularly in older neighborhoods. Even commercial buildings often

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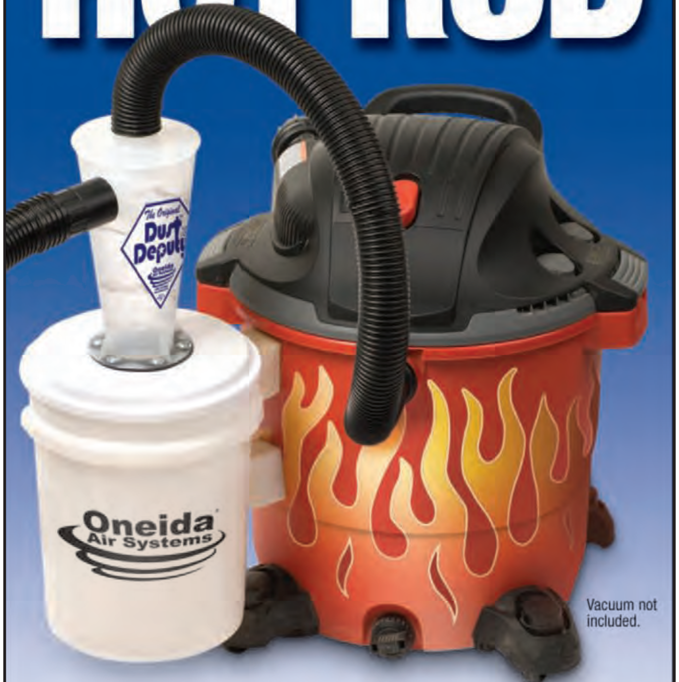
A drum sander is used to sand and smooth the glued-up countertop.

were framed of now-hard-to-get woods. Homes built during the post-depression period, however, tend to be made of less valuable woods. Old barns were once a great source of wood for recycling, but are getting harder to find. Due to insurance problems, permission to acquire woods from remodeling and renovating jobs is also getting harder. Most owners don't want you taking just a few boards, so it's a good idea to make friends with a renovator. Of particular interest are the interiors and trim, especially from public buildings and churches. Even something as hum-drum as shelving boards can be valuable, if made of a quality wood.

Discarded furniture often results in great finds. Don't expect an "Antique Road Show" find, but garage sales, going-out-of business sales and even the community clean-up days can result in haul-it-away furniture with recyclable woods. You'll often discover, as I did, a beautiful and useful wood under coats of paint. Even an ugly piece of furniture may have some redeeming woods. Avoid veneered projects as veneer rarely covers great woods.

Storm-damaged trees, logging tree tops and other woods destined for the burn pile can also be reclaimed.



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Another source is wood pallets. Pallets are readily available and many companies will gladly let you take them. These can vary from great finds to only firewood quality. Heavier equipment is usually shipped on hardwood pallets. Heavy-duty pallets holding imported products can also be good, because cheap woods in one country may be valuable in another. I've often found valuable, thin plywood used with many heavy-machine crates. This makes great cabinet backing and craft projects. On the other hand, softwood pallets aren't usually worth the effort. Do not use pallets that may have contained toxic materials such as paints, chemicals and so forth.

This beautiful matched walnut comes from a discarded tree top.

The author constructed a walnut gun case entirely from discarded trees.

If you're looking for small pieces of wood for wood turnings, making small boxes and so forth, check the local yellow pages for cabinetmakers, boat builders, millwork plants and

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Shown is a piece of spalted maple the author discovered in a firewood pile.

others. You may be able to acquire their off-cut pieces for a small fee. Do not attempt to reclaim woods that are rotten or have potential insect problems. Doing so can potentially bring insects such as wood beetles, wood roaches and even termites into your shop or home.

RECLAIMING

The first step is dismantling. This can be easy or difficult depending on the project, the type of wood used and the intended use. Use a sharp knife, chisel or sander to remove a bit of paint or finish to determine the wood used. A great lesson I learned from years of dismantling in my dad's shop was how furniture was put together. This made for easier restoration of valuable pieces, as well as a better idea of how to build furniture. It's important to dismantle with a plan in order to retain as much valuable wood as possible. A big sledge-hammer is not the answer. Remove all fasteners, screws and nails as they can quickly ruin a saw, planer or jointer blade. Scanning the wood with a small woodworker's

The old-fashioned way of getting small pieces was often using a maul or froe to split log sections. Then, shape the surfaces with a hand plane.

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Next prepare the wood for use. Grit and dirt can also dull woodworking tools. Use a stiff-bristle brush to scrub off all dirt, grit and grime. Do not use a steel or metal brush as these can leave particles in the wood surface. Don't immediately run the wood through your saw, jointer or planer as old hardened varnish and paint can also dull and chip blades. Use a belt or drum sander to remove the old finish or paint. Make sure you wear a dust mask.

Green wood is another source for reclaiming economical wood, and I've also done a lot of that. A friend from Mississippi related the tremendous amount of storm-damaged pecan and other valuable trees piled and burned during the Katrina disaster. Storm-damaged trees can be a valuable wood source, as can dead or damaged trees that must be removed from yards, trees removed for developments and even the tree tops left from logging operations. Milling slabs from a saw mill can sometimes result in usable woods as well. Even short chunks usually relegated to the firewood pile can be used by wood turners. I always look for unusual grain, crotch figures and other beautiful woods, even when cutting firewood.

A chainsaw mill, such as the Granberg International Small Log Mill, is an excellent choice for woodworkers, wood turners and others for converting small logs into lumber. You will need a chainsaw with at least a 20" bar and 50cc motor.

A bandsaw with resaw blade can also be used to mill small wood chunks, or whatever you can lift and support on the saw table.

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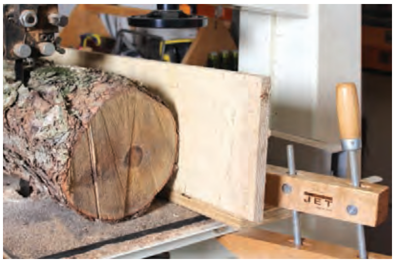
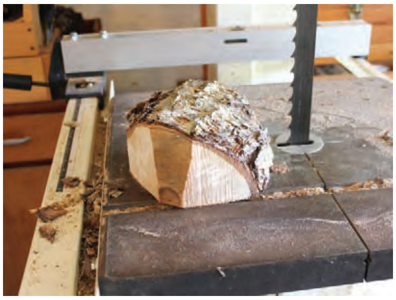


A shop-made fence, clamped to the saw table, holds the logs in place for the cuts. You can cut planks or even veneer with a bandsaw setup.



You can also cut wood-turning blanks quickly and easily on the bandsaw. One wood-turning technique is turning green, bark-on bowls. First step is to rough-cut on the bandsaw.

Many trees that would not be utilized by commercial loggers can also result in excellent material for the serious woodworker. If you have a mid-sized chainsaw and are handy with it, you can saw your own logs ready for milling.

MILLING

You can cut or mill lumber if you have the right tools, some of which you may already have in your shop. The old timers cut logs into sections by "riving" or using a large chisel, wedges or a "froe" to split the wood apart. This can be used to make rough cuts, followed by a large hand plane to smooth and shape the lumber. Or, use a bandsaw to resaw the wood into planks or

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blocks. You will need to utilize a wide resaw blade for this chore.

A chainsaw mill is a tool that can be used by the occasional woodworking "logger" to saw small trees into planks and "blanks." These handheld mill attachments are fastened to a chainsaw bar for slabbing and milling. The Granberg models are excellent choices and include the Alaskan MK III Saw Mill, which can be mounted on bars from 24 to 56 inches, as well as the Alaskan Small Log Milling Attachment, which can be mounted on saw bars 20-inches or less. These saws are also excellent choices for cutting beams for constructing buildings. The units require the use of a ripping chain and a chain saw of at least 50cc.

If small logs for turning are to be stored for some time before use, their ends should be coated with exterior house paint.

The ultimate for home-shop milling is a bandsaw mill, such as the Timber King model shown. These mills are portable, waste little wood and are relatively safe and easy to use.

A bandsaw mill is the ultimate tool for the serious wood collector. You can saw large or small logs into boards and turning blanks. I once had a big, round-blade mill, which ran off my

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tractor's power-take-off, but I've used a Timber King portable bandsaw mill for a number of years. It's easier to use, wastes less wood and is portable.

Some small bandmills, such as the Wood-Mizer, are extremely portable, relatively inexpensive and can even be stored in your garage when not in use.

Freshly sawn wood is green or uncured but can be used for some projects and construction. Barns, outbuildings and even post-and-beam buildings are often constructed of fresh-cut beams and posts. A favorite project of woodturners is turning green wood bowls. The wood is extremely easy to turn and provides an unusual project. Short chunks of 12 inches or less are commonly used. Use a chainsaw to saw the logs into lengths. If you're not going to use immediately, coat both ends heavily with several

With a bandsaw mill you can cut planks, beams, even turning pieces, quickly and easily and often from tree sections that would otherwise be wasted.

In most cases, wood must be dried before use, especially for furniture and cabinetry. Air drying is an ages-old and effective method of drying wood. Any dry area with plenty of air circulation can be used. I've used a barn for many years.

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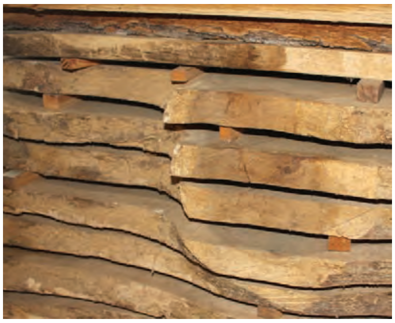
coats of exterior house paint. Rough-cut the wood to shape on a bandsaw before turning.

Most woodworking projects, however, are made from dried wood. Purchased lumber is kiln-dried, but the old-time method is air drying. I've used this method for many years with lots of successful projects. It takes time and the appropriate space; a dry area with good air flow. You can air-dry outside, covering the wood, or you can air-dry inside. I've air-dried in my barn for many years.



The sawn wood planks must be stacked apart with wooden stickers for air circulation.

It's extremely important to know the moisture content (MC) of wood to be used for furniture and other projects. The Lignomat moisture meters come with a chart listing the different woods groups.

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Regardless of whether inside or outside, the boards should have their ends coated with house paint. The wood stack must also be located well off the ground or floor and supported to prevent sagging. To allow for air circulation, 3/4-inch wood stickers are placed between the planks as they are stacked in place. If drying outside, add corrugated metal or plastic roof panels as a cover, then cover

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the entire stack with a material called “shade cloth” available at nursery supply houses. This keeps off direct sunlight, yet allows for air circulation. Now you simply need to wait. It normally takes about a year of drying for each inch of lumber to bring the moisture content down to around 12 to 14 percent, but this will vary according to the humidity and temperature in your area. You will need a moisture meter such as the Lignomat Pin Meter. Check the moisture content of the wood in the stack occasionally.

You can speed the drying process to a few months by using a home kiln. These can be purchased, or you can build your

The Lignomat pin meters are extremely easy to use; simply push the pins into the wood surface. Air-drying will usually bring MC down to 10 to 12 percent as shown with this walnut.

Before using for construction, the dried lumber must be shop-milled. A power planer, such as the Woodmaster shown, is used for surface and thickness planing.

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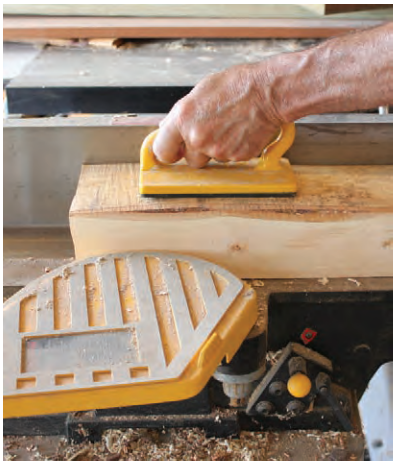
own. A number of plans are available on the internet. Lignomat also has an accessory that allows you to instantly check the moisture content of the wood in the kiln, as well as the humidity. Most furniture projects are constructed from wood with a 6 to 9 percent moisture content (MC). The best tactic is to store the wood in a heated shop or other area until you reach the desired MC. Check the MC with the Lignomat meter before using.

Nothing is wasted from my recycling, reclaiming and shop projects. Whatever I can't use in projects gets burned in the fireplace, either as kindling or as fuel.

For more information on building the projects and using the tools found in this article, visit www.extremehowto.com. **EHT**



A jointer is used for surface planing small pieces and edges of larger pieces. A hand-held plane or power planer is used to surface-finish large planks that won't run through a planer.

The author even recycled old deck boards for a deck rejuvenation project. Removing the old boards, belt-sanding their bottom sides and reinstalling them.

Sawing your own wood allows you to produce big slabs for table tops.

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Simple Repairs for Asphalt Roofs

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By Matt Weber

Roofing installation is a costly and complicated project, which is why it makes sense for homeowners to stretch their improvement dollars by maintaining their existing asphalt shingles to the best of their abilities. The roof is the primary weather barrier of the home—a place where damage should never go unaddressed. The forces of harsh weather and ultraviolet rays will inevitably wear the roof to the point of requiring replacement, but homeowners can conduct some basic upkeep procedures that will help keep out the rain a little longer.

SHINGLE REPAIR

Do-it-yourselfers who aren't afraid of heights can make simple but important repairs to loose shingles and flashing. Asphalt shingles are the most widely used roofing material in residential construction, accounting for roughly 80 percent of the U.S. market. Today's asphalt roofing greatly outperforms the shingles available 30 years ago, but still costs significantly less than higher-priced rivals (including tile, wood, cedar, slate and metal). Typically, very little maintenance is required; but that does mean *some*.

After a couple of decades, or after severe storms, you'll need to inspect an asphalt roof for signs of deterioration. The most obvious perpetrator is a roof leak, indicated by water stains or wet areas in the attic. In some cases these can be patched, but in the case of a serious leak you may need to re-roof. Remember that when tracking the source of a leak, once the water has penetrated the roof it often will flow down the ceiling or framing before dripping onto the ceiling below. So evidence of a leak on the ceiling can be misleading about where it originates on the exterior of the house. If you have access to the attic, first locate the entry point of the leak from inside the house before trying to address it at the roof level.

Also, excessive loose mineral granules in the gutter or bare spots on the shingles are evidence that the asphalt is deteriorating. Sunlight and freeze/thaw cycles can weaken the adhesive that holds the granules to the roofing material, which will eventually require replacement or recovering. Shingles also tend to crack or curl from sun exposure, and wind can blow them off the roof.

Repair loose or buckled shingles with roofing cement. The idea is to prevent simple loose shingles and dog-eared corners from catching a strong wind and pulling away from the roof and opening a major gap in the building envelope. You can pick up roofing cement/sealant in caulk-type tubes for use in a caulking gun. Make sure the product is labeled for your intended application. Also, roofing cement can be used to patch cracks or minor breakage in the shingles. While asphalt shingles are designed for years of low-maintenance

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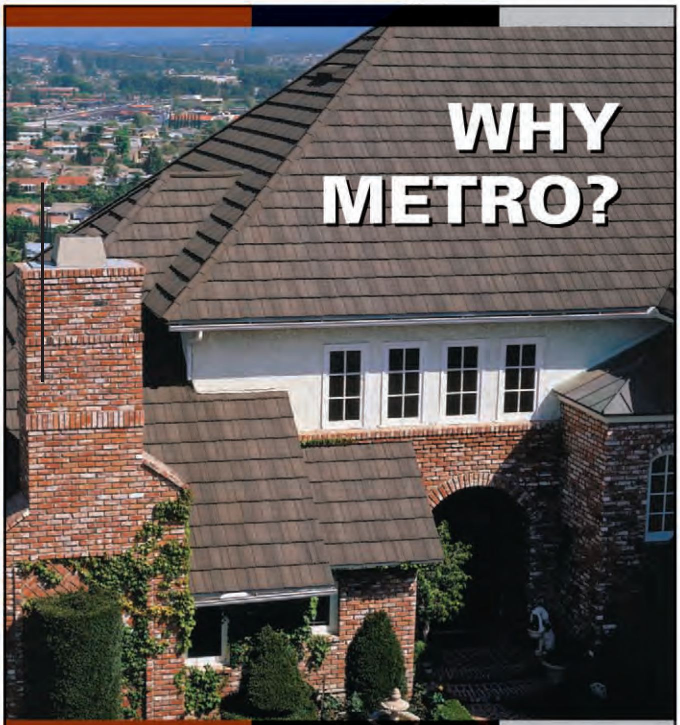

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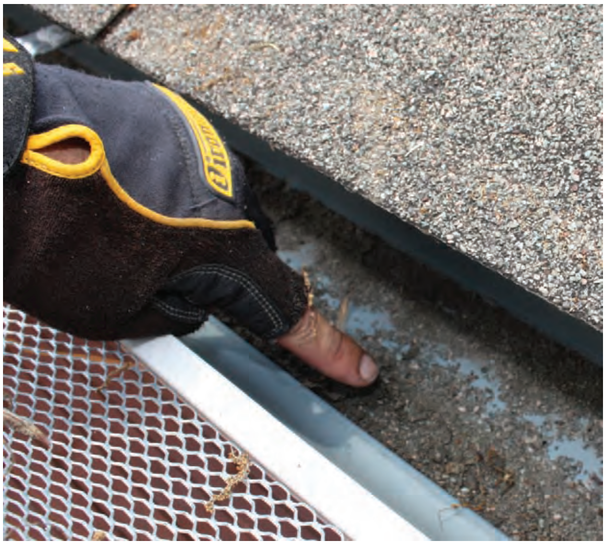
performance, eventually—hopefully 15 to 20 years—it will need to be re-shingled.

If necessary to replace a shingle, tear off the uppermost damaged shingle by grabbing its sides and pulling it loose. Do the same to the other damaged shingles beneath it. Use a pry bar to remove the old roofing nails. Patch any holes with roofing cement. Reinstall new shingles using the manufacturer's standard shingle-replacement procedures, and working toward the upper courses (see diagram for typical nail/sealant application). When you reach the top course, coat the top of the last shingle above the seal line with roofing cement. Insert the last shingle beneath the overlapping shingle. It may help to drive a couple of nails to anchor the installation. Bear in mind that the heads roofing nails should be fastened flush to the roofing material but not penetrate through the shingle.

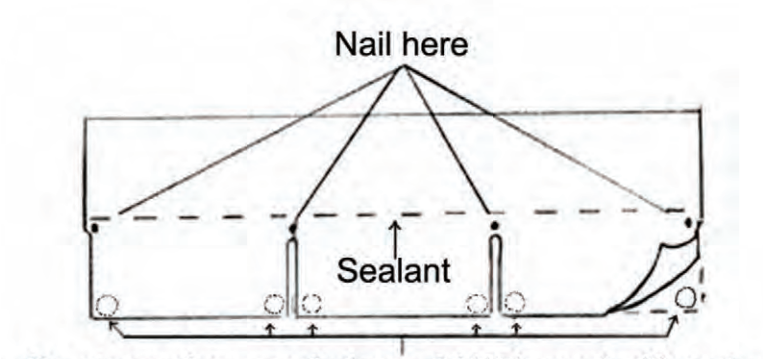


Excessive mineral granules in the gutter can be an indication of wear on asphalt roof shingles.

ROOF PENETRATIONS

Keep an eye on roofing penetrations such as flashing around pipes and skylights, which are prime candidates for leaks. For loose flashing, refresh the seal with new roofing cement.

Many of these metal roofing fixtures, such as HVAC pipes, vents, etc., are prone to rust. Not only can these be unsightly detractors of your home's curb appeal, but if left unchecked the metal can completely corrode through the material and cause structural problems. A handheld wire brush is a good tool to scrub away rust from roof



On steep slope roofs (over 21/12), apply 1” spots of roofing cement beneath the corner of each tab.

fixtures. Or, boost your abrasive power by chucking a circular wire brush into an electric drill. Knock off all the reddish brown spots and wipe away the loose dust. Then, apply oil-based metal primer to the fixture. Rust-Oleum, for example, is a quality metal primer that helps protect metal and is available in a wide variety of colors to complement common roofing tones (www.rustoleum.com). Always use drop cloths when painting at the roof level to avoid accidental spills that can be very apparent on the roof surface.

CLEANING AND PREVENTION

One common complaint about aging roofs is the presence of black streaks or stains that may develop over time. The dark streaks are usually algae, and without the right chemicals, they can be difficult to address. Whereas a bleach or chlorine-based solution applied with non-pressure methods will kill black algae and generally rid the stains with the rinse phase, this method alone won’t prevent the algae from returning in just a few months.

Another option is to use a sodium hydroxide-based product like Stainhandler from Savetime Corporation (www.stainhandler.com). Stainhandler is a biodegradable product and when properly mixed and applied according to directions it will not harm your plants. The product is sold in a concentrated formula, which the user dilutes and applies with a pump-up type of garden sprayer. *EHT* recommends avoiding the use of a pressure-washer when working on roof shingles, because too strong a stream can blast holes in the asphalt. The entire surface should be sprayed to avoid streaking. Allow the product to work for fifteen minutes and then rinse off the roof with a garden hose.

To prevent future staining for up to 20 years, homeowners can follow the cleaning procedure by installing zinc strips at the ridge line of the roof. With this system, when rain flows over the zinc, harmless zinc oxide is created. The invisible zinc oxide then coats the roof surface and inhibits the growth of fungus,

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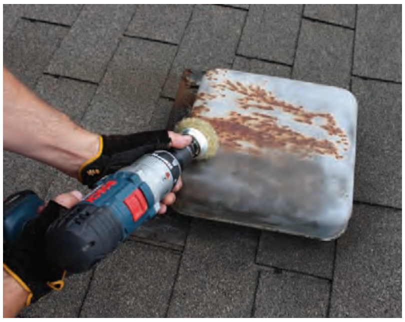
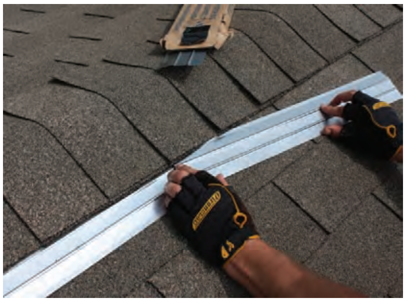
moss and algae. Zinc strips are available from a variety of manufacturers and can be used on new or existing roofs.

To install zinc strips, start at either end of the roof peak and install a continuous row under the ridgeline. Apply roofing cement along the sealant edge and slide the strip beneath the shingle, leaving the lower half exposed to treat the rainwater. Nails are not required, although there should be a 1/8-inch gap left between the strips to allow for thermal expansion.

From simple repairs to preventive maintenance, these simple procedures for asphalt roofs amount to no more than a weekend's worth of work, but they can pay off greatly in the long run of your roof's performance. **EHT**



Sand away rust on metal roof fixtures and coat with an oil-based metal primer.



Zinc strips installed over asphalt shingles can protect the roof from algae stains.

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If your asphalt shingles are beyond repair and recovery, it may be time to pull the plug on them and install a new roof. Replacement shingles are always an option, but it's one of many. Here are a few notable products that help round out the world of roofing.

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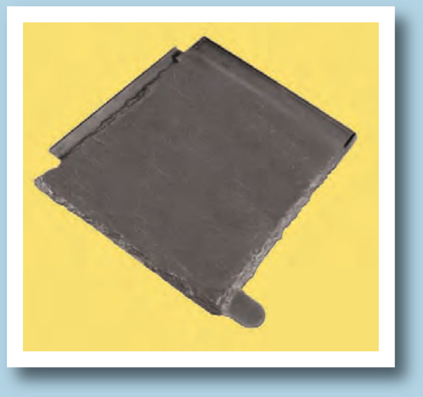

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ZMesh from Heatizon is a durable, low-voltage bronze screen heating element that serves as a long-term solution for winter ice and snow problems on roofs. ZMesh is installed under non-conductive (non-metal) roofing surfaces including asphalt, slate, cedar shake shingles, as well as membrane roofs. It can be nailed and stapled, providing an easy installation for invisible protection

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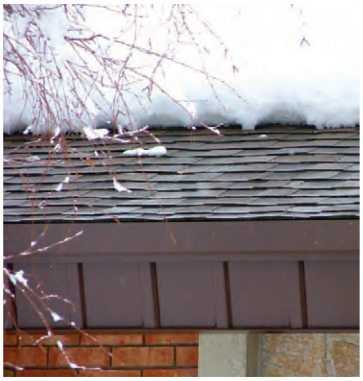

that lasts. The heating elements carry a 25-year warranty. For gutter deicing, GutterMelt features a self-regulating cable with a 10-year warranty, and can be installed in gutters, downspouts, along eaves and in valleys. Learn more at www.heatizon.com.

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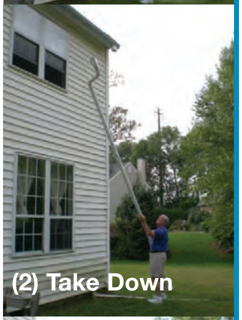
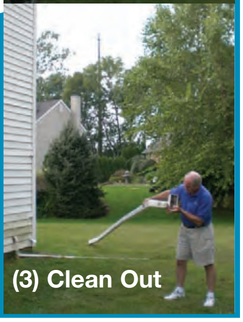


(2) Take Down



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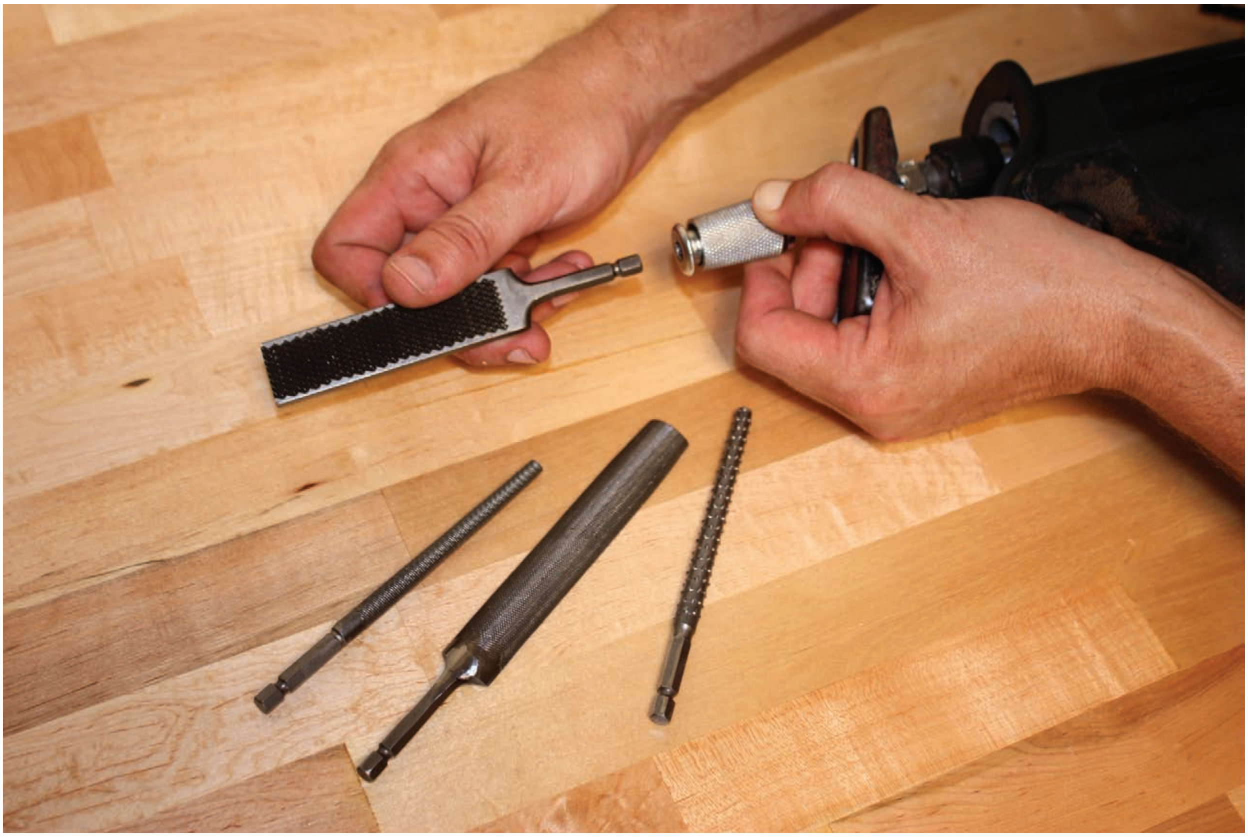

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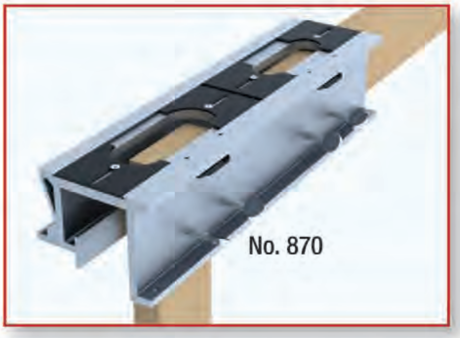

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  Ecolife is a Green Approved Product by the NAHB Research Center and is eligible to earn points towards Green Certification under the National Green Building standard.
- **Fastener Performance**
  Ecolife is no more corrosive to fasteners than untreated wood, and is approved for direct contact with aluminum, even in wet applications.
- **Lifetime Appearance and Warranty**
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Bob Heidenreich,
Owner, The Deck Store

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